Film Quarterly

Volume 50
Number 2
Winter 1996–97

Sexual Violence: Jennifer Montgomery Interview

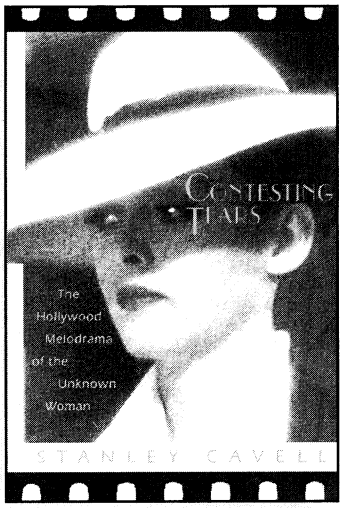
Directors Shiro Toyoda and Krzysztof Kieślowski

Video Collecting • *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*

$5.95

FILM culture

BAREBACK RIDER (1974). COPYRIGHT DOUGLAS KENT HALL.



Contesting Tears

The Hollywood Melodrama of the Unknown Woman

Stanley Cavell

Brilliantly uniting his loves of film and of philosophy, Stanley Cavell identifies four classic movies—*Letter from an Unknown Woman*, *Gaslight*, *Stella Dallas*, and *Now, Voyager*—as examples of a new Hollywood genre: "the melodrama of the unknown woman."

*Paper $14.95 208 pages
48 b&w photographs

Late Editions: Volume 3

Connected

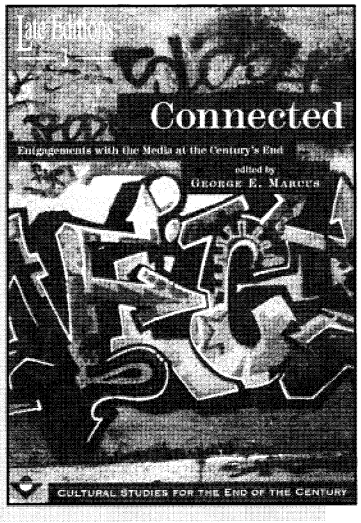
Engagements with the Media at the Century's End

Edited by George E. Marcus

Blending the immediacy of interviews, the objectivity of journalism, and the intellectual rigor of scholarship, *Connected* explores the effects of the stunning proliferation of information technologies in the twilight of the twentieth century.

*Paper $22.50 450 pages
20 b&w photographs

Late Editions: Cultural Studies for the End of the Century



Westerns

Making the Man in Fiction and Film

Lee Clark Mitchell

This landmark study shows that the Western owes its perennial appeal not to unchanging conventions but to the deftness with which it responds to the obsessions and fears of its audience. And no obsession, Lee Mitchell argues, has figured more prominently in the Western than what it means to be a man.

"Not only an exceptionally original, sophisticated, and lucid study of a central American genre, but also a profound meditation on manliness."
—David Leverenz, University of Florida

Cloth $29.95 348 pages
29 b&w photographs

**Cloth edition available*

chicago

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS

5801 South Ellis Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60637

Visit us at http://www.press.uchicago.edu

Volume 50
Number 2
Winter 1996–97

Film Quarterly

George Paul Csicsery
Memories of Sexual Violence: An Interview with Jennifer Montgomery 2

Charles Tashiro
The Contradictions of Video Collecting 11

Paul Coates
The Sense of an Ending: Reflections on Kieślowski's Trilogy 19

William Johnson
Toyoda and the Challenge of Representation 27

REVIEW
Susan Barber
The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert 41

BOOK REVIEWS 46

Cover: (top) Terence Stamp as Bernadette in *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* (see page 41); (bottom) Jennifer Montgomery's *Age 12: Love with a Little L* (see page 2).

Editor
Ann Martin
Editorial Intern
Devon Reed
Copy Editor
Jonathan Leff
Book Review Editor
Stephen Prince
New York Editor
William Johnson
Los Angeles Editor
David Ehrenstein
London Editor
Edward Buscombe
Rome Editor
Gideon Bachmann

Editorial Board
Leo Braudy
Ernest Callenbach
Brian Henderson
Albert Johnson
Marsha Kinder
Linda Williams

Indexed in
Access
Art Index
Arts and Humanities
Citation Index
Book Review Index
Film Literature Index
Humanities Index
Index to Critical Film Reviews
International Index
to Film Periodicals
MLA Directory of Periodicals
Readers' Guide to
Periodical Literature

Printed in USA

Type
TechType
Richmond, CA

Printing
Allen Press
Lawrence, KS

Film Quarterly(ISSN 0015-1386) is published quarterly by the University of California Press, Berkeley, CA 94720. Periodicals postage paid at Berkeley, California, and at additional mailing offices. Canadian GST #R122058662. POSTMASTER: send address changes to Film Quarterly, University of California Press, 2120 Berkeley Way, Berkeley, California 94720.

Subscriptions are $24 per year for individuals, $53 per year for institutions. Subscribers outside the U.S., add $6 for postage. Single issues are $5.95 for individuals, $14 for institutions. Domestic claims for nonreceipt of issues should be made within 90 days of the month of publication, overseas claims within 180 days. Overseas delivery is not guaranteed.

Subscription requests and requests for advertising rate cards should be sent to the Journals Department, manuscript enquiries to the Editor, Film Quarterly, at the University of California Press, 2120 Berkeley Way, Berkeley, California 94720. Unsolicited manuscripts should be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

The paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements of American National Standard for Information Sciences—Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials, ANSI Z39.48-1994. ∞

Back issues subsequent to Volume 18 (1965-66) write to the University of California Press, 2120 Berkeley Way, Berkeley, California 94720. ♻ This journal is printed on recycled paper. The views expressed in the articles are those of the authors only.
© 1997 by the Regents of the University of California.

George Paul Csicsery

Memories of Sexual Violence

An Interview with Jennifer Montgomery

When art photographer Jock Sturges was arrested in 1990 in San Francisco and charged with taking lascivious pictures of nude children, the art world rallied to his defense. Once charges against Sturges were dropped, the furor died down. With *Art for Teachers of Children* in 1995, 34-year-old New York film-maker Jennifer Montgomery added a postscript with an unusual twist. Her contribution to the debate over pornography and censorship that was spurred by the Sturges arrest is richly original.

Made in black and white for a mere $35,000, *Art for Teachers of Children* is a deceptively simple-looking film that serves up a number of penetrating insights into some of the most troubling issues of American sexual politics. Montgomery seizes the high ground early by revealing that her film about an illicit liaison between a photographer and his underage student is based on her own adolescent relationship with Jock Sturges in the 1970s. Near the end of the film Montgomery includes nude photographs Sturges took of her, blending them into a montage with photos of the actress in the film.

The tale is a familiar one: a photography teacher and dorm counselor (played by artist Duncan Hannah) at an exclusive girls' boarding school seduces 14-year-old Jennifer (Caitlin Grace McDonnell). The seduction is initiated more by the bored and curious adolescent girl than by the sophisticated, sensitive adult. Nevertheless, the affair is doomed by the man's intellectual vapidity and emotional dishonesty.

The slow, minimalist unfolding of this colorless entanglement brings the couple to a peak of ennui, and the relationship collapses without drama. One expects the emotional damage suffered by the student to be the principal currency of the film, and it would be in the victim-dominated rape sagas of today's made-for-TV movies. Jennifer Montgomery is smarter than that; she establishes the girl's hurt, but then proceeds to deeper matters. Being a victim is only a part of the story, and perhaps not the most important part. Among the by-products of the stunted and disappointing relationship is Jennifer's enduring respect for good photography and great photographers. Years later, when asked by the F.B.I. to testify against her ex-lover in a child pornography case, she refuses to cooperate. For Jennifer, the law is too crude a mechanism for dealing with the emotional damage she suffered in the relationship. Life is more complex.

Jennifer Montgomery was interviewed in April 1995, following the screening of *Art for Teachers of*

Children at the San Francisco International Film Festival. Despite criticism of its technical weakness, the film received relatively wide theatrical distribution and festival exhibition. Montgomery claimed that she never expected it to reach audiences beyond a limited art circuit, and that the film was primarily her way of working out some personal problems.

In a follow-up interview conducted by phone in May 1996, she talked about two new films in development, both radical departures from her previous work. One is based on the novel *Against the Grain* (*A Rebours*) by J.-K. Huysmans, the other on a *Playboy* magazine interview with Russian politician Vladimir Zhirinovsky.

A final phone conversation with Montgomery took place in early July 1996, a few days after she finished a four-day shoot for *Troika*, the film dramatizing Zhirinovsky's *Playboy* interview. The rest of this $40,000 feature film was to be shot later in July. As this interview goes to print, Montgomery is still editing.

Before becoming a film-maker, Montgomery earned a liberal arts degree at Wesleyan University and experimented with writing and painting. She moved to San Francisco in 1984 and worked as an activist with the Victoria Marcado Gay and Lesbian Brigade to Nicaragua: "We sent a brigade down with $10,000 for armaments," she said. She later concluded that she was "a pretty lame activist," and enrolled at the San Francisco Art Institute.

GEORGE PAUL CSICSERY: Was the San Francisco Art Institute where you got interested in making films?

JENNIFER MONTGOMERY: The day of registration my father was visiting me, and he had a Super-8 camera and 20 rolls of film. He'd always made arty home movies, and he had an attack of camera-itis that prompted him to hand the camera over to me. It was a literal handing-on of a medium.

I got caught up in the film scene at the Art Institute. I studied with George Kuchar and Keith Sanborn, Abigail Child, and then I met Peggy Ahwesh, who was visiting at the Art Institute. We hooked up and started making work together. I moved back to New York with her and went to the Whitney Independent Study Program to work with Yvonne Rainer; I made autobiographical Super-8 films in the New York experimental film scene and showed them in the New York Gay and Lesbian Experimental Film Festival.

Tell me more about the films.

The first one was called *Home Avenue*. It was a 17-minute documentation. I went with a friend to a gun shop in Middletown, Connecticut, where I was raped at gunpoint ten years earlier, and I reconstructed the event. It was a memory piece similar to *Art for Teachers of Children*.

I made the film in a week—shot it, hand-processed it, edited it—and then showed it at the end of the week. It brought me to the public, because a lot of people were interested in the way it dealt with memory and with sexual violence.

After that I made two other films. One, called *Age 12: Love with a Little L*, is a weird mishmash of autobiographical anecdotes, send-ups of psychoanalytic Lacanian theory, and animal pack behavior, because it was about adolescent sexuality and clique behavior among 12-year-old girls.

I, a Lamb was a takeoff on *The Silence of the Lambs* and issues of anthropomorphizing animals. I happened to make it during the Gulf War, so it was also about the military arm of the law and how the Gulf War was being represented to us. It's a film essay, and it's my favorite film, but it's the one people have the most problems with. It has different people speaking to the camera. One woman skins a deer leg and talks about slaughter. The writer Sarah Schulman talks about the night the Gulf War started. I had very little success with it.

Art for Teachers of Children is contiguous with all these other works. I wrote a treatment in 91, and didn't shoot it until 92. Then I had a six-month hiatus because I couldn't stand the footage. I put it away. I had no money. I started editing in 93, and finished it in 94. The first time I showed it was in Berlin.

How did you pick the subject?

At the time I was reading *In a Different Voice* by Carol Gilligan, which talks about what happens to girls when they hit age 12—they become conscious of their gender. I have a background in gender issues dating back to my college years. I also think that there is a contemporary interest in the formation of identity during those years, especially for women. The formation of your sense of your sexual identity and your gender happens around that time.

What's interesting is the way you present what used to be called sexual awakening in this character.

She's portrayed as a somnambulant character. She's slug-like, but then acts upon her life in ways that might surprise you. She's passive, but then takes ac-

tion. I feel that's a very accurate representation of how adolescents formulate desire. On the other hand, it's not necessarily meant to be a sexual awakening, because the experience she has with this man isn't exactly . . . I mean, it's a sexual experience, but awakening is such a positive term.

You described it as a negative experience very successfully, but then I wondered if it's possible for anyone to go through adolescence and have their first sexual experiences be positive?

Duncan Hannah and Caitlin Grace McDonnell in *Art for Teachers of Children*

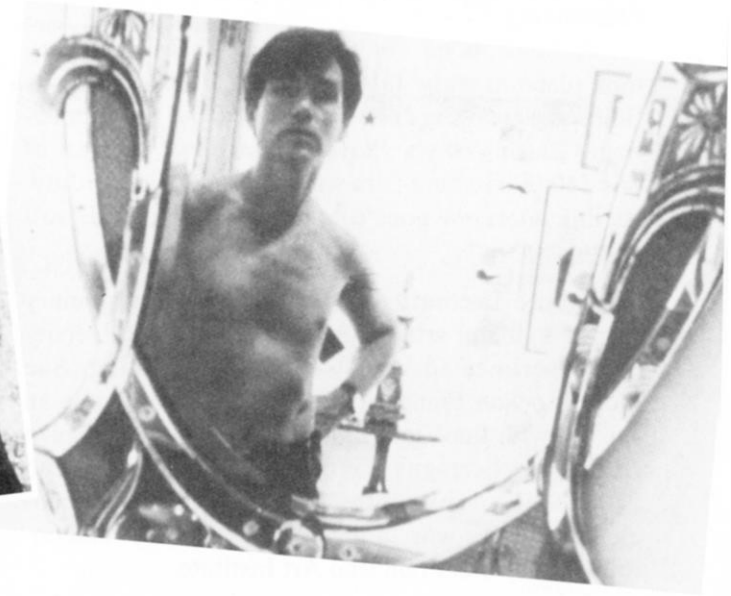
I've heard rumors—some people who waited until they were older, or had experiences with peers. But I don't know what the deal is. I don't think there's one deal for people. That was 1975, and we were under a lot of pressure: we went to boarding school; we were 15; and there was all this pressure to have sex. It was the 70s. There's a lot of pressure now.

Your heroine chooses her photography teacher as her first sex partner, and your treatment makes it quite clear that she's the initiator.

That's just what happened. I do think that happens a lot, and I am interested in the consensual aspect of these experiences. Albeit negative, they still often aren't as black and white as: Somebody seduced you and made you do things you didn't want to do. I wanted to play those things against each other. Here's this person who initiates sexual exchange with a man who knows he's at great risk, who's subject to the temptation because he's obviously got some kind of repetition compulsion about it in his own erotic world. She initiates this thing and goes along with it willingly, and yet has experiences within this consensual context that are psychically damaging. Consent does not mean that you can't be damaged by the people you fall in love with. We all know that.

Yet the film refuses to advance a victim thesis.

I think most victim theses are extremely reductive. I have experienced a lot of violence in my life, and whenever I've come even close to being put on the stand, I've had a horror of the way the law deals with victims. The American profile of the victim is modeled on the testimonials of people in talk shows. I dissociate around the idea of myself as a victim. It's not a desirable position. It's almost impossible to erase the concept of victimization, and it's very popular. I can't believe that healing can take place in this kind of testimonial context, where you go public with everything.



Duncan Hannah as John

Reliving is a popular format . . .

I've been through a lot of psychotherapy myself for a lot of reasons, not just because I had weird things happen to me, but because I was interested in the process. I believe in the talking cure, and film is a kind of talking cure, but it's a representation, it's about

making art, and art always has to allow a different perspective. Allowing a different perspective into your story is part of the healing process.

I am not a great advocate of Twelve Step, but I happen to be involved with someone right now whose life it saved. I'm a great equivocator. I think the film is an accurate representation of my own equivocal feelings. Our society is very eager to place the label "victim" on people, but not really eager to understand the complexities that lie behind that. Our society has very little room for the individual's experience; it just wants to lump everybody together. But what society doesn't?

Duncan Hannah

There's a sullenness in the lead character of Art for Teachers of Children, *but also in the others. Does that reflect your experience? Just hearing you talk today tells me you were probably more effusive as an adolescent?*

One of the complaints that I would agree with is that this girl is much more passive than I was as a teenager. I was not sullen that way. I was pouty, but not so sullen. She's the 1990s version of the adolescent. There's also an idea about non-acting. I like her hazy weird spaciness. I felt it was very genuine in her as a person and wanted to embrace it as a way of letting in difference: This is not me; this is another representation of another kind of adolescent. Maybe then I can view these events from a third perspective.

How authentic is the vapidity of the art teacher?

Well, a lot of the discussions [in the film] are verbatim phrases pulled from letters or journal entries. But there's intentional vapidity, because I was interested in the kind of educational-film format—honed down, spare dialogue—which is often really stupid, because it's meant to pose really obvious ethical questions to students who are then forced to discuss the issues.

Did you want to emulate that format in some way?

Someone said, "Your film is way too low-tech for an educational film, because it's got a hand-held camera, and it's too all-over-the-place." But on the other hand, these characters are meant to just hold the place

Caitlin Grace
McDonnell as Jennifer

of people who might insert themselves into the roles and say, "Well, I wasn't exactly like that, but I can identify on some level." Also, I thought it was really funny. The things that these adult Lotharios say to their young students and lovers is in an amazingly bizarre language. And the language of the pedagogue talking to his protégées is hilarious. There are scenes in this film where the camera shakes because I was laughing so hard when I was filming.

Why didn't you use a tripod?

I don't know, I couldn't stand it. I never used a tripod with Super-8.

But a 16mm camera is heavier.

Yeah, I did a lot of damage. I had to see a chiropractor for six months. I think I would use a tripod the next time. I just wanted to hold on to the Super-8

aesthetic, and to some notion of documentary. It was a thin notion, though. I know at points it's hard to handle, but now I really am glad, because if the camera is totally static, and the characters are totally static, and there is no crosscutting, it could be more than anyone could take. If there was no subjectivity of the cameraperson, no awareness of that cameraperson, I think it would have been a really different film.

There's a big gap with a lot of questions left unanswered between the first and the second parts of the film. You established that you felt violated, or damaged.

In the voice-over I say, "The damage he inflicted . . . " I was worried about being heavy-handed with the voice-over, so things got left out that might have filled in a lot of blanks, but I got tired of being accurate. There's a lot of hubris in the idea that you can be accurate. It's the same idea as the testimonial: you give everybody information, therefore they have an accurate picture. I don't think so; I don't believe in that.

The one thing missing that I think works in your favor is the absence of information on how the relationship really ended.

That's what I cut out.

Did you shoot it?

None of that's shot. It does say he would call every year on New Year's Day at my parents' house, and he would tell me what he was doing. And then I'd tell him how he'd damaged me and request a portfolio. It says, I lectured him on the ways he had inflicted damage and the vanity he had instilled, and I asked him if this was something he had done a lot. There are things I say in the film that reflect that I come back to him with a list of complaints. He conceded he had done the wrong thing and believed me when I assessed the damage. That is very accurate.

Originally I had a line about how he said he had heard of this great new singer, Laurie Anderson—this was during one of these weird calls I got on New Year's Day—and then he sang me the lyrics to "Oh Superman." Then I asked him not to call again, and he never did. I left that out.

There are sequences in which the lovers are enraptured by the famous photographs of great masters. How did this become a theme?

It's all out of the relationship, and just as important as the sex, if not more so. I think just as much psychic damage can be inflicted in the photographer-subject relationship, in the inculcation of high art, youth-obsessed aesthetics, regardless of whether sex actually takes place. I try to foreground the way that he teaches me, or her, about beauty and about art photography and the nude. The events described in the film are what happened. Weston, Stieglitz, Paul Strand were integral parts of my education. They were characters.

Your participation as a photo subject was a continuation of that work?

Right, but those portraits of Georgia O'Keeffe are great photographs, regardless of how contentious their relationship was. I also think that Edward Weston, who was pretty screwed up in his own way, was a great photographer. In the film I put the photographs next to the fake Jock Sturges photographs that I use of Caitlin. I just had pictures taken of her by a friend of mine. They were very loosely based on photographs of me. Obviously, he [Sturges] is the better photographer.

But you also used real Sturges photographs in the film.

Yes, at the end there are photographs of me that have never been published, but then the voice-over says these are not of me anymore. That reflects on chemical molecular changes, but it's also meant to be a trope around the artificiality, the simulation, of the character in these fake photographs.

The whole film is about a fake teenager who turns into a fake adult. She's obviously just the same old pouty character as an adult. These are fake Jock Sturges pictures, and then there are the real pictures of me, but that's a fake me because I'm not that person anymore. And that's the whole idea of the film: it's a fake documentary; it's about fake secrecy. It's really important to me that it's all transparent, all totally coy. It's about what happens when you keep secrets, because they're all transparent anyhow. Things will come out one way or another, and just because they come out doesn't mean they are true.

Is the film version of your conversations with the F.B.I. about Jock Sturges accurate?

The F.B.I. said at the end, "Well, you'll be hearing from us, because you're going to have to testify whether you like it or not." I went to an A.C.L.U. lawyer and he said, "They're never going to subpoena

you because you won't testify in their interest." There may have been other people who were also unwilling to testify. He has a lot of subjects in his photographs. And then all these arts groups rushed to his defense, he had a great lawyer, and the case was dropped. It was a very thin case to begin with, and it ended with a whimper. That was another thing I cut out. There was no closure on this for me. Why should there be closure for my audience? I never heard from them [the F.B.I.] again, and I was left with these weird residual feelings, so the best way to communicate that is to leave things open.

Do you know if Jock Sturges has seen your film?

I don't know. I'm not in touch with him. Someone who knows his wife told me that she has seen it, so I imagine he has. But I never heard anything official; my lawyer was never contacted, I was never contacted, and neither was Zeitgeist, my distributor. It would be inconceivable to me that this man didn't see the film. He would have to have his head in the sand.

You depict him as someone concerned, sincere, helpful, and your treatment turns that part of him into a parody, making him even more shallow.

Well, he was a hired advisor to a number of students. He was our dorm head. But he also, in a way that many people are in boarding schools, was a self-appointed advisor. A lot of these students had really heavy things going on in their lives and needed attention. He saw himself—and he did have some background in psychology—as being capable of working with this very heavy material. At the beginning, he took pictures of us and he performed an important service. We needed to know that we existed. There was this sense of uncertainty about who we were. But he was self-appointed, and got in very deep with a number of students, not just girls.

I was interested in an examination of certain kinds of privilege—the privileged environments of both the boarding school and the artist colony, and the ways that those institutions sequester people. There's also the privilege of this man's background and his (accurate) notion of himself as a member of the aristocracy.

The artist colony scene is a good exposé of hubris in the art world.

Yeah, hubris in the art world made to parallel the preppy aristocratic school setting, which has the hubris to see itself as capable of handling what are often inflammatory situations, and takes the law into its own hands. It's not unlike colleges that, rather than report a campus rape to the police, will try and deal with it internally. That's hubris too. And on top of that you have the institution of the F.B.I., and its mechanisms.

Then there's the hubris of the art world itself. People like David Wojnarowicz and Robert Mapplethorpe and Holly Hughes and Jock Sturges are lumped into this weird vat. The art world has ways of differentiating people—so-called great artists—when their work does, perhaps, have pornographic elements.

What's happened to the film, and how do you see it now, almost a year later?

I got a Guggenheim to work on my next project, and I know that was an outgrowth of the film. I traveled all over the world to film festivals with it.

This film is still perceived by at least some faction of the independent film scene as incompetent. No matter how many art people tell others that they think it's an important film, someone's going to say, "Well, what about the jerky camerawork?" I've gotten panned a few times. The people in more mainstream film venues will say, "This isn't well done."

Is the technical sophistication, or lack of it, the main thrust of the criticism?

There are two arms of criticism; one is that, and it's linked to the idea of bad acting, also. We should all want a certain kind of good acting, we should all want a certain kind of good camerawork. Anybody who falls off the boat with that is doing it because they can't do the real thing.

I made specific aesthetic choices. I felt that that lumpen aesthetic was appropriate, partly because it's intended to not serve up the expected gratifications.

The other arm of criticism comes from audience members who get upset because the film doesn't condemn someone they see as a rapist and a pornographer. I explain that I think it's a much more complicated question than that. People, no matter how much they see the film, still want an answer, and they don't see the film as my response. They see it as just raising more questions.

That's the recovery movement attack.

Exactly. Why can't you give us a black-and-white answer, yea or nay? Or, do you not think this man is a criminal, and shouldn't he be in jail?

Where did the idea for your new film, Troika, *come from?*

It's an outgrowth of going to Russia. From May until fall 1995 I was traveling with *Art* . . . and went to Russia with this woman I was involved with at the time.

Troika has two interwoven narratives. One is an interview with Vladimir Zhirinovsky. Before I went to Russia, I read an interview with him by Jennifer Gould in *Playboy* magazine. It was an amazing interview, because in the course of it he tries to force this woman and the translator to have sex with him and his thugs. I became obsessed with making a film about this.

Here's this interviewer speaking English, and then Zhirinovsky speaking Russian. And there's this 18-year-old Russian girl who translates everything he says. In effect, the girl is the mouthpiece for this bombastic Russian man who says disgusting things.

He wants to have sex with the interpreter, Masha, and he makes comments about how she's a real woman versus this Jennifer Gould character, who, he says, is a defeminized woman because she's working.

The last time we spoke you said you would call the film Homosexuality Is the Sputnik of Human History. *Why did you change it to* Troika*?*

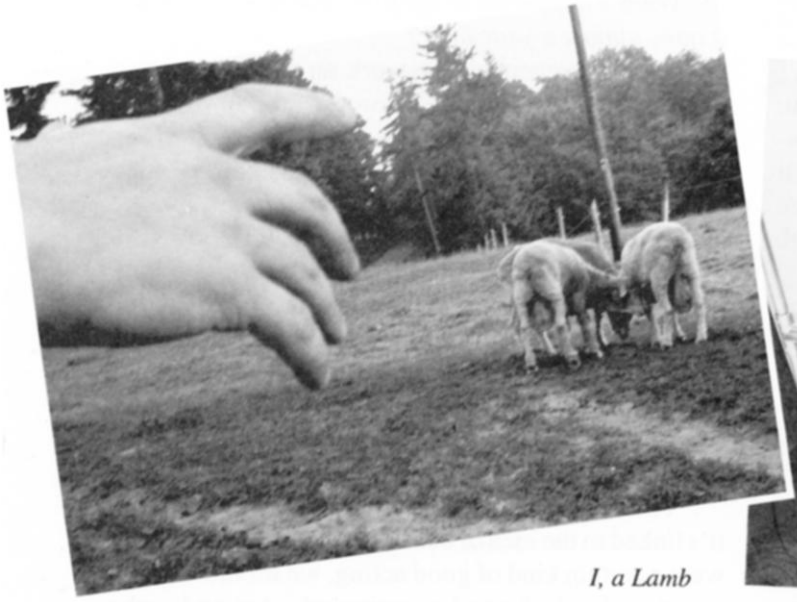
I'm calling the film *Troika* because it's a triangular scene between an interviewer, her translator, and Zhirinovsky, who are all stuck on this boat together. A lot of great films that take place on boats are about triangles, usually involving two men and a woman; just think about *Dead Calm*. I think I might use the sputnik statement by Zhirinovsky as an intertitle in the film.

In Russian, sputnik means traveling companion, or constant companion. When Zhirinovsky says homosexuality is the sputnik of human history, it means that it's the companion to human history. Two seconds later he goes on to say we should wipe homosexuals off the face of the earth.

I wanted to adapt that interview, but then also to interweave it with a narrative about a lesbian relationship. I actually went to Russia with this woman I was with, and our relationship fell apart in Russia. And there was this constant threat of violence; it spun out of control. In the film, it is a sputnik to the interview with Zhirinovsky. One of the women becomes a kind of Zhirinovsky character, full of bombast.

Did you shoot the interview just as it appeared in Playboy*?*

Pretty much, but I edited it down, and it has this weird non-narrative slant to it, because the two stories don't develop in a typical narrative fashion, but are meant to play off each other. It's less complicated.



I, a Lamb

A thug (Vitali Baganov) in *Troika*

Since my last film I learned about parallel cutting.

Are there other stylistic changes from your last film?

It's in color. There are a lot of similarities actually, because some of the situations have an interview feeling to them—of people being set up somewhere, and a reenactment feeling. This one is more of a spin on Russian propaganda films, but it also has that docudrama aspect. My original interest was the idea of reenactment, and things being clearly fake. That's why I decided to shoot on the Connecticut River. But it's a reconstitution of a linguistic situation: an interview mediated by a journalist, translated into English, printed in *Playboy*, then removed from *Playboy*, translated back into Russian, then filmed as a reconstitution of something that's been filtered through somebody's brain.

I shot for four days on a yacht on the Connecticut River. It was a bizarre culture clash between Connecticut shoreline maritime culture and Russians. It was probably the best shoot I've ever done. There was a Slavic Warholian feeling on the set—a yacht called the Xanadu that we renamed the Alexander Pushkin. The yacht's owner, who lives on it, is the main distributor of Cabbage Patch Dolls in the U.S., so there were Cabbage Patch Dolls all over the place. I grew up in Connecticut, and the cult of the cute there is an obsession for me, and I wanted that as the backdrop. We did add some odd Russian props.

How is it going to be a spin on Russian propaganda films?

A friend covered the elections in Russia, and he shot Super-8 footage for me that's going to be cut in with this. I wanted him to film Zhirinovsky propaganda and election posters in Moscow, and scenes of the canals and the Volga River itself.

We also incorporated scenes of the actors watching footage of the actual Russian election coverage. *[The 1996 Russian presidential election runoff campaign took place while Montgomery was shooting on the Connecticut River.—G.P.C.]*

On the set of *Troika*: Lev Shekhtman (Zhirinovsky) and Marina Shterenberg (Masha)

Shekhtman, Shterenberg, and Jenny Bass (Jenny Gould)

Are you going to shoot some more?

I'm shooting the parallel narrative of a triangulated relationship between the journalist, the interviewer, and another woman in Manhattan. It's a grounding device for the film, because the interview itself is the majority of the film. And some of the language from the interview is going to be spoken by the characters in this relationship.

How did you cast the film?

I tend to cast on instinct, and I found somebody who is perfect for the most important role—the trans-

lator. She is a young Russian girl who was a student of mine, Marina Shterenberg. She's translated the whole thing for us.

Zhirinovsky is played by Lev Shekhtman. The interviewer is Jenny Bass. The original interviewer in the *Playboy* interview was Jennifer Gould, a Canadian. I ended up with a Russian cinematographer from St. Petersburg, and all these Russian thug types who play Zhirinovsky's Falcons.

Is the film in English?

It's in Russian with a translator translating everything. When Zhirinovsky speaks with the translator it's in Russian, and when she either refuses to translate, or does so inaccurately, there are subtitles. And in the other part of the film, which is in English, there will be Russian subtitles.

A lot of it is about language. The language is peculiar. Zhirinovsky plays on words in weird ways: when talking about rape, he says that in Russian rape and coitus are the same word: " . . . and I mean rape in a good way." I got fascinated by the way he speaks Russian. His language is very bizarre; he holds a lot of fascination for Russians in New York. The men on the shoot were just obsessed with him.

What is your other project?

It is a feature film adaptation of a cult classic called *A Rebours*. It's translated as *Against the Grain*, or *Against Nature*, and is a late-19th-century decadent classic novel about a dandy living in Parisian society. He's a misanthrope, and loathes all things natural. He decides to sever his ties with society, moves to a hermetically sealed abode in the suburbs of Paris, and becomes completely dedicated to simulacra. Everything in the home is against the grain of Nature. The book is an encyclopedia of a disordering of the senses. He goes through the different art forms—poetry, painting, music—and becomes obsessed with turning Nature on her head in very refined ways.

Eventually he starts to suffer from a mysterious neurasthenic illness. He can't eat, and starts taking all his nourishment through enemas. He gets really sick to a point where he can't function. The doctor comes and says, "If you want to survive you have to rejoin society." So he has to pack up this strange experiment and move back to Paris. It's about his loathing for everything and his obsession with perfection. The story influenced Oscar Wilde a lot.

It's a late-19th-century book that I think reverberates at the end of the 20th century, especially in relation to the malaise of the end of the century and the obsession with simulation. Also, he has a problematic relationship to his body. To this guy—a misogynist—Nature and women are one and the same thing. He details his relations with women. I think both this film and the Zhirinovsky film are all about misogynists—very extreme characters.

I saw Todd Haynes' *Safe* recently; it's about a woman who has an environmental illness and has to withdraw from society in order to continue to live. And this film is about someone who withdraws from society and develops an array of symptoms from severing his ties with it. His punishment and his cure is to have to be a member of society.

How are you treating it?

I'm working with an artist friend, who I think is really brilliant. Her name is Clare Pentacost. We're going to do it in a way that's not period accurate. We're reading a lot about dandies, and also about the dandyism of the 60s. The consumer culture—like catalogues and mail order and the Home Shopping Network—will get thrown into 19th-century settings. It's a hard project to explain, because it's a cult book that visual artists get obssessed with. It doesn't have much narrative; it's a series of strange vignettes.

So this would complete a trilogy about misogyny, or about the escalation of misogyny? The common theme among this film, Troika, *and* Art for Teachers of Children *does seem to be misogyny.*

I realized that was what drew me to both of the new projects—not that they're a trilogy with the other film, which is so much my own story, but that there's the idea of a subversive depiction of misogyny. I would rather put it on the screen and see what it looks like.

And it gets me out of my own story, because I do tend to work in this autobiographical mode, and I've gotten sick of it. I feel like I'm finally putting *Art for Teachers of Children* to bed.

■ George Paul Csicsery is a film-maker who is currently completing a documentary about a child molestation case; among his previous 16 films are *Where the Heart Roams* (1987) and *N Is a Number: A Portrait of Paul Erdos* (1993).

Art for Teachers of Children is distributed by Zeitgeist Films; the short films *Age 12: Love with a Little L* and *Home Avenue* are distributed by Women Make Movies (both in New York City). *I, a Lamb* is self-distributed.

Charles Tashiro

The Contradictions of Video Collecting

When I worked for the Criterion Collection, we visited the home of a movie collector to shoot some of the items in his collection for the supplementary section of a laser disc that we were producing. Since the collector was busy the moment we arrived, his wife greeted us and showed us into their living area, which had a high ceiling to the roof of the town house. Against one wall was a staircase to the second floor. Both it and two other walls were covered with movie posters, lobby cards, and other artifacts. Against the fourth wall stood a bank of shelves that sandwiched a medium-size home entertainment center between hundreds of videotapes. As it turned out, the collector had not been able to greet us because he had been in the midst of recording a movie off cable, and had not wanted to run the risk of missing any of the film as it came on after the commercial break. All the while we were there, he monitored the broadcast, simultaneously conversing with us and keeping the remote in hand.

I do not know if this collector ever watched his collection. Given its size, and his devotion to its growth, I doubt it. Like many video collectors, he was stuck on the video paradox: the more time devoted to taping materials for the collection, the less time available to watch them. To take the time to watch something, on the other hand, means potentially missing the opportunity to tape that movie always desired for the collection. This collectors' equivalent of Xeno's paradox might well lead to madness were it not balanced against economic constraints or the censure of loved ones. Of course, not all collectors suffer from this symptom; it is merely an example of a logic—or more properly, lack of logic—implicit in the act of collecting.

I've never written about video collecting before now, despite the desire to do so, because I felt that in order for the work to have validity, it would have to move beyond personal experience. Perhaps my temporary separation from my video collection, the literal and figurative distance provided by five thousand miles and three months, enables me to overcome the two problems which have heretofore constrained my speculations: the difficulty in getting good empirical data, and a nagging doubt as to the validity of empiricism itself. Rereading Walter Benjamin's essay "Unpacking My Library," both the model and inspiration for my desire to write on the topic, I realized that his lyrical description of his book collection was the only legitimate approach to what remains a highly private process.[1] While his observations about his collection provided insights into the habits of collecting, his frank examination of the irrationality of the habit and his willingness to express that self-awareness in language alternately emotional and analytical may be the most valuable contributions of the essay. To submit a subjective process like collecting to the pseudo-objective strictures of empirical method seemed, finally, the height of distortion and deception. So this essay is written in a modest spirit, in the hope that by first understanding the reasons behind my own collecting habits, I might then be able to understand those of

others. And if it never moves beyond personal experience, it may at least provoke a smile of recognition from my fellow collectors.

There are first the obvious reasons. I have built a collection of those film titles that I love, that I desire to be able to view repeatedly. This is the simple answer, one that, even as I make it, I recognize as a half-truth, since I know there are many films that I love, available on video, that I have not added to my collection. And there are many in my collection that I don't "love," but watch repeatedly, just as there are titles in my collection that I hardly ever watch, but feel obliged to have. I do not have any films in my collection which I hate, but even that is a treacherous distinction to make. Hate is too close to fascination, seducing with the powers of the despicable, to discount its appeal completely. No, I cannot claim that those films I hate will never enter my collection, not least because films offer too much to love, too many pleasures in the peripheries to help me ignore those things I have forbidden myself.

Discs offer the seductiveness of immortality, and invite our complicity in the cheating of Death.

There are further rational motivations, of course (that copy of De Palma's *Obsession* acquired as research for a project combining Hitchcockian menace and Bertoluccian lushness which never materialized; the copy of *La Règle du jeu* for a long-ago finished paper on Renoir which I cannot quite force myself to erase). In fact, far from lacking sensible explanations, there is never a want of them—this title I love, that one I "should" have for research, this one has superb photography, that one has a heroic delivery of smart dialogue—a compendium of emotional "reasons" (never was a word less appropriate) coalescing at the moment of purchase or copying to motivate adding it to the collection. At best, however, these are the good face put forward, packaging for whims, contingent upon the particular constellation revolving at the irrational moment of decision to add to the collection.

These momentary contingencies always influence the "reasonable" self-justifications. I have, for example, many times intended to buy a title that I've long desired, only to find it temporarily out of stock. It can be available the next day, but by then it is too late: the mood to purchase has evaporated. I have also gone to the store with no intention of buying, and walked out with a title I might never consider otherwise. Or, most perversely, I have intended to buy a particular disc and left it behind in favor of something else. For a title to make it to my collection is a triumph over these prevarications, with their *rational* basis in a limited budget. Had I more money to spend, I would no doubt simply buy those titles that interest me. Yet these agonized indecisions, the constant weighing of pros and cons, are integral to the "logic" of collecting.

And even this most "rational" of considerations, the allocation of limited financial resources to more practical needs, raises another issue: Why do I spend the extra money to buy some titles on disc while relegating others to the tape collection? To put the question differently, why are some titles worth missing a meal or two, while others are only worth the effort of pressing the record button? This split collection expresses not just a choice of one medium over another, or a simple consideration of the costs, but a different attitude towards each, created by their potentials. Tapes can always transform into another title, becoming something entirely different, and are thus wretchedly impermanent. My tapes, many watched more frequently than favorite discs, are second-class citizens, substitutes for what I could have if I had the money to indulge myself freely. They are disposable in a way discs are not, and if one expression of my "love" of a film is my desire to have a copy of it, that love is never fully expressed until it can sit as a disc, congealed into aluminum and plastic, glued in place as a designer object, with no power of transformation, no ability to adopt new programming whenever I feel the need to erase. Discs elude me; tapes serve me.

In their cheap, shoddy availability, their ability to be erased and reused, tapes pull the duty of meeting my everyday desires. Subjected to the abuse of constant play, they express my contempt for a medium too willing to change. Ironically, discs, not tapes, are the objects designed for repeated viewings. Discs do not wear; tapes lose their luster with each pass over the heads. It is precisely *because* discs are permanent that they have the allure of the static, self-contained art work, the mystique of preservation, fragility that must be maintained, isolated, *revered*. Since the eventual destruction of a videotape is inevitable, it can be treated badly from the first. Discs offer the seductiveness of immortality, however illusory, and invite our complicity in the cheating of Death. The promise of permanence helps to create it by inspiring more care-

ful maintenance, just as malleability encourages nothing so much as abusive indifference.

By groveling in everyday realities and leaving rarefaction to the disc, videotape enables me first to capture potential additions to my collection, then to watch them repeatedly. Each viewing of a tape is an audition for a disc to come, and the more frequently I watch a tape, the more likely I am to invest in its disc counterpart. (Those rare prerecorded tapes I have are more like rehearsals for titles almost certain to be added once they arrive on disc.) Yet none of the titles I watch repeatedly are first-rate films; only a few rise even to the level of middle-brow respectability. In short, the titles that are most frequently watched, that I "like," are rarely those I "love." As these tapes prefigure my disc collection at some point in the future, the titles are not those I most respect, and therefore are not those most "worthy" of addition to the collection. At the same time, they are the ones most likely to be added because of their proven capacity to please.

This fairly rational motivation to purchase discs on the basis of proven pleasures is at best one thread in a web of suppressed irrational desires. For once purchased, such discs almost always end up safe in their jackets, watched as rarely as any of the others. Those discs purchased halfheartedly, with only a dim expectation of pleasure, frequently become favorites. And even this general rule of irrational purchase is unreliable, since the exception also occurs, where I *do* end up watching a disc repeatedly that I had watched frequently on tape. In fact, the decision to purchase a disc on the basis of its having pleased on tape is merely one more fantasy of rational decision and control. The truth is, there is no predicting what titles will "stick" as discs.

This unpredictability threatens to make collecting seem little more than elaborate self-deception. Yet however chaotic and confused it may appear, collecting is not random. It is irrational, but it is not *anti*-rational. Some shape, perhaps messy and awkward, reflects the tastes of the collector. For myself, the key may again lie in my exaggerated preference for discs over tapes. By this preference, I express a faith in technical reproduction, or better, a technological definition of quality. This technical "reason" serves as perfect rationalization, and through it I stake an emphatic claim to the importance of picture and sound over story and character, to those *technical* aspects of film best served by laser disc reproduction. By that claim, I lay the groundwork for the overall structure of the collection, its bias toward those films that favor visual style. Furthermore, to express concern for visual style over narrative is to remain outside the empathic envelope, to distance myself from emotional involvement.

Thus the logic of collecting is built on the shifting sands of personal desire, then justified through a rationalizing structure. The structure may remain invisible to the outsider. And the terms of the construction can be bent to the point of breaking the rationale when a temptation that cannot fit the construction nevertheless overpowers resistance and enters the collection. The structure nonetheless remains a very real phenomenon to the collector, the means of negotiating a world of plenty that would otherwise threaten to bankrupt any other than the wealthiest collector. Like any logic followed step-by-step, however, it frequently has unexpected results, a fact that helps to account for the awkwardness of many of the decisions involved in the growth of the collection.

"Bizarre" choice is merely the purest expression of personality.

My taste for visually demonstrative titles such as historical spectacles justifies adding, for example, *1492: The Conquest of Paradise* to my collection, despite critical hostility, the disbelief of friends, and my own bemusement when seeing it for the first time. Yet because I suspect *1492*'s reputation will improve with age, this violation of common sense expresses another major motivation for adding to a collection: the "I told you so" phenomenon. This pleasure of martyrdom, produced by the belief that a bizarre choice may eventually prove my prophetic powers, is one of the seldom acknowledged pleasures of collecting. "Bizarre" choice is merely the purest expression of personality; later social vindication of the selection becomes a confirmation of *self*.[2] When a friend bought *The Untouchables*, I viewed it as a personal triumph; for years I've considered it one of the best American films of the 80s, to the considerable consternation of my friends. When one of them came around to my way of looking at it, I could see the wheel of opinion turning.

If, like my friends, I had thought of *The Untouchables* as trash, I no doubt would have left it as a tape.

Even my tapes, however, are not completely divorced from the logic of technical superiority. However low my regard for the medium, I rarely record multiple titles on a single tape. The prospect of reducing the tape's technical quality by slowing it down for reasons of economy is unthinkable, an offense to my aesthetic sensibilities, a fate I view with an attitude somewhat like that which moves me to wipe a stain from a clean surface—short of disgust, but very far from indifference. This is the justification I give whenever I am faced with the dolorous financial consequences of my technical fetish.

© C. Tashiro

However attractive, elaborate, and well developed this justification may be, I suspect that it is subordinate to another motivation. To speak of which titles are added, which watched repeatedly, is obviously at some confused level still to talk about the aesthetics of the titles contained. In fact, the "reason" I don't like to have multiple titles on a single tape is at least as much an expression of the collection as a self-contained work of art as it is a question of technical capability. To have multiple titles on a single tape or disc introduces an inelegant shape to the order of my collection. The librarian in me, which motivated me at the age of ten to create a "catalog" for the few books I possessed, rebels at the prospect of multiple entries for each tape.[3] If at such a young age I wanted to create alternative (if unnecessary) systems to provide the pattern and proportion the collection itself lacked, and if this bureaucratic fixation only increased in adolescence, when I could be driven to despair by classical audio recordings with multiple composers, it is hardly surprising that as an adult the prospect of multiple entries for a single tape should be distasteful.

Films, with their multiple authors and points of reference, present a cataloging nightmare, since no system can anticipate the reasons I may wish to retrieve a title, no catalog *except the film itself* can embrace the totality of pleasures a movie may provide. Like Borges's Pierre Menard, catalogers try to approach the richness of the original through its rigorous, systematized duplication before consigning it to the shelves of the Library of Babel. The inconvenience, the messiness that a problem like a tape with multiple titles provides make me view such tapes as anathema, a break in an ordering system almost as important as the collection itself. And it is of course a point of honor that this system be unintelligible to anyone else. The ultimate sign of possessing the collection is the pattern of order—or chaos—imposed upon it. It is the final sign of personality, an invisible web thrown over the collection, woven by my obsessions, and thus, perhaps, the final proof of possession.

Putting multiple programs on single tapes, on the other hand, expresses the effort to hoard as many cinematic experiences in as small a space as possible. This process equates the film (or television program) with its title, while allowing the collector to "play" with the collection's composition. Having multiple titles on single tapes introduces a fractious variety that wars not only against the impositions of the cataloger, but also against the drive for unity of the one-title-in-a-space collector like myself. Such heterogeneous collections value time and title-hoarding. Purist collections like mine express an imperialism toward the collection's *state in space*, tapes and discs marching across the shelves like well-drilled soldiers in the parade of conspicuous consumption.

At the same time, a pattern of playful taping introduces a potential chaos that threatens the very basis of collecting. In fact, in my experience, those collectors who put multiple titles on a tape are those most likely to have the largest collections, and therefore the ones

least likely to watch them. These collectors tape against some future that never arrives, fabricating a potential of limitless viewing pleasure while indulging in the reality of endless collecting. Ultimately, they too are interested in the march of tapes across the shelf. They merely record more to achieve the procession. The collector is more likely to smile than shrug in despair at the widening circle of confusion, however, because the collection's growth is his or her secret joy.

This desire to see the collection grow is the one thing shared by all collectors. Constant expansion creates a progression proceeding into an imagined infinity, expressed concretely in the collection as it exists, giving shape to a fantasized potential. It is this conjunction of imagination and objects that makes collecting both satisfying and frustrating. As each addition is lingered over, appraised, studied, manipulated, it gives to the body a share in the mind's satisfaction. It is more than the excitement of possession; it is the thrill of tuning body and mind to similar desires, the run of the finger along the edge of the cover like a run of the mind along the imagined, unending shelf. Of course, these desires are always truncated, since the infinity must remain potential. But each object promises that infinity by embodying one piece of its final shape, one part of its possibility.

Benjamin describes the thrill of book collecting in historical terms, as the realization of a book's individual history as an object, seen and handled by other collectors over the years, as well as the collector's history of possession.[4] Discs, a much younger medium, do not usually deliver this historical pleasure. The thrill of acquiring a rare book nonetheless has its parallel in home video collecting. In both activities there is a sense of personal victory each time a rarity or deeply desired favorite enters the video collection. For myself, the most extreme instance of this phenomenon occurred when a friend returned from Japan with a letterboxed edition of *Ludwig: The Mad King of Bavaria*. The fact that I had not seen the film, even in its shortened American version, and that my image of it was shaped by almost universally negative reviews did not diminish my excitement at acquiring a title I had wanted to see for 20 years. (Or perhaps this ignorance enhanced expectation that much more. Mystery tinged with defiance marks a peculiar form of aesthetic courage.) I have watched the disc from beginning to end exactly once, not because I agree the film is the disaster its critics claim, but because I no longer *have* to watch it. For by now it is clear that the number of times an item is *used* in a collection is at most a secondary point in the idiosyncratic psychology of collecting.[5]

If there is a bravado in video collecting, it lies in that acquisition of rare items: titles never released on commercial video; imported letterboxed versions of titles released in the United States only in pan-and-scan editions; the occasional title that goes out of print and suddenly becomes a highly desired collector's item; or acquiring titles before friends (my purchase of *Once Upon a Time in the West* was motivated at least as much by a desire to beat a friend to the mark as it was by an affection for the film). This bravado also

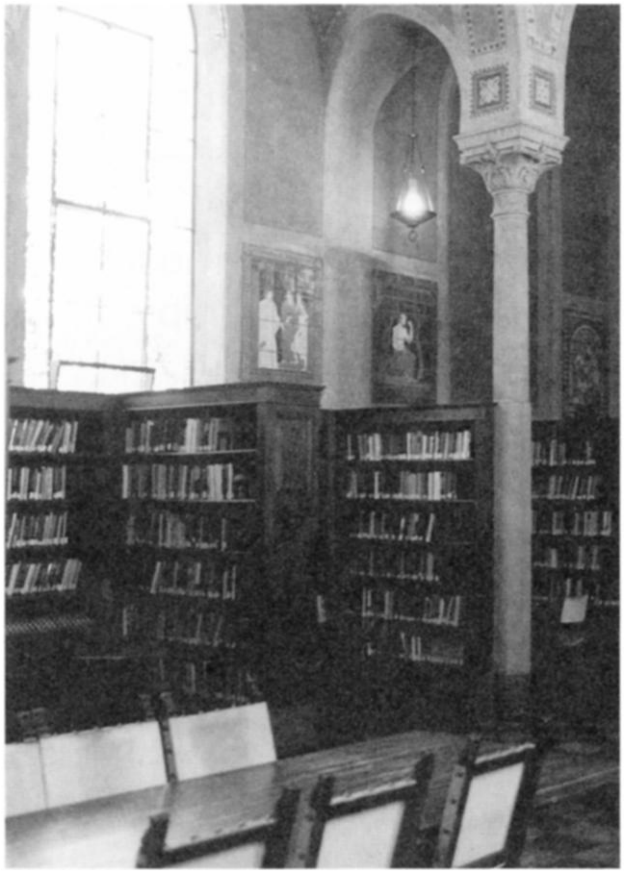
> "... for the collector... ownership is the most intimate relationship that one can have to objects." Walter Benjamin

helps explain why I should have watched my copy of the Japanese import of *The Last Emperor* (closer to Bertolucci's cut) more often than I have the director's cut edition of *Blade Runner*. I actually prefer the latter *film* to the former, but the Japanese *disc*, a relative rarity, provides a mark of distinction that the widely released director's cut of *Blade Runner* doesn't.

If there is a consequence to the "historical pleasure" of book collecting, and the absence of that pleasure from video collecting, it lies in the shape and feel of the books as objects. A book, tattered at the edges, yellowing and full of handwritten notes, is more likely to announce its history, its simultaneous existence in space and time, than a laser disc. Thin, clean, shiny, antiseptic, laser discs may seem less human and resonant. The physical markers of history and difference on a book (the marginal notes, the autographs), so much a part of their fascination, are present on the surface of a disc only to its detriment. The surface must remain virginal for the disc to function. The fact that discs are both newer and have a different form, however, does not negate physical state as part of their appeal.

Quite the contrary—it is the very requirement to remain clean that makes discs fascinate as objects, their clear, cool surfaces promising technical perfec-

tion. While their *blankness* seems to offer limitless potential, a minimalist understatement in favor of the text, their silvery surfaces shimmer, refracting their surroundings into prismatic, kaleidoscopic fragments. Book collecting is the Victorian activity par excellence, the habit of a settled bourgeois, comfortable in front of a fire, books lined up on the shelf. With eclecticism the measure of Victorian style, books on a shelf reflect the bourgeois aesthetic in their visual heteroge-



© C. Tashiro

neity, their careless, slightly dowdy variety. Discs, on the other hand, promise modernism at its sleekest, the reduction to pristine forms and reflective surfaces. Like many other modernist objects, however, discs require cleaning to maintain their shiny newness, their constant promise of refreshed potential. When they get dirty and their packaging worn, there is a tendency to shy away from them, perhaps even to replace them; in other words, *to deny their right to remain in the collection* because they begin to show their age.

It is part of this cool, blank aesthetic that both disc and its programming should be subject to change and replacement. It is difficult to imagine the Benjaminian collector growing tired of his collection. One can only add to a collection, never part with parts. The laserdisc-collecting experience requires the willingness to trade in as a means of doing away with the old. This phenomenon has its historical reasons: laser discs only became popular as a medium when they offered different, better film-to-video transfers than videotapes. However, once the possibility of difference was introduced, there was no stopping the process, since to allow for differences between transfers was to acknowledge tacitly the subjective procedures involved in a technical process, and thus the impossibility of a perfectly "faithful" transfer. Yet that faith in the potentially perfect copy persists, expressed in the exploitation of ever-newer technologies, striving always to get closer to the film original, but never quite arriving (once again, like Xeno's Achilles). As a result, change is valued for itself, and with each new technical capability, both collectors and producers feel compelled to improve on what has come before (for example, *Star Wars* has gone through three film-to-video transfers, and there are rumors of a fourth in the wings).

The measure of improvement, however, has less to do with the film titles being served and more to do with the technical capabilities of the disc medium. Quality is measured in terms of the image and sound track's *cleanliness*: the number of dropouts, the amount of hiss, the degree of fidelity in digital reproduction. The logic of the surface of the disc spills over into its production and consumption: the cleaner, sleeker, shinier the image, the purer, richer, clearer the sound track, the better the disc. It is no longer enough for the disc to have a pristine surface; it must be able to produce an image and sound track at least as pure. While the "perfect" transfer would be one that disappears, it has no chance of achieving this goal, no matter how slick the technology may become. The technical conceit of the goal inevitably calls attention to itself, even if only to proclaim, "Look how *absent* I am!"

That many, if not most of these "clean" transfers are "letterboxed" only adds to the seduction. The letterbox does more than matte the image and focus the gaze. By reducing the scale of the widescreen image, it domesticates it, turns it into something to be looked at and manipulated, something small, like an illustration from an art history text. If we hold our hand up to a widescreen image in a theater, it becomes lost in the expanse of the image across the wall. If we extend our hands towards the letterboxed frame, the image *fits* in our hands. If we can hold neither, the smaller one at least looks as if we could. The fact that

many letterboxed discs present epics, with their wide framings of expansive vistas, only heightens this effect through the inescapable contradiction of large spaces rendered apprehensible. The image area becomes a small slit, opening on to an infinitely more attractive world that, because of the matte from the letterbox, rushes towards the vanishing point with the exaggerated insistence of Tintoretto's *Last Supper.*

Visually sloppy pan-and-scan transfers never create this contradiction, since there is no matte to focus the gaze. Further, if the transfer operator follows the action, rather than the picture, there may be no vanishing point at all to beckon the eye, since it may lie out of frame. As a result, the pan-and-scan image flattens onto the surface of the television as the letterboxed image beckons away. In this contradiction between the illusion of physical possession and the sense of infinite regression, the letterboxed image offers one more paradox to be nurtured by the collector. It is the impossibility of a letterboxed image that makes it attractive. In it, all the unresolvable desires and frustrations inherent in the act of collecting come together. By heightening perspective, letterboxing becomes a literal visualization of the retreat to infinity, the collector's desire to collect forever. We never arrive at the vanishing point; collecting is never finished.

Any attempt to resolve these frustrations inevitably means a return to the store in the belief that "just one more" title will complete the collection. In fact, the only possible resolution to these contradictions lies either in the literal infinity of Death or the figurative death that is the self-imposed end to collecting, an activity unique in its ambiguous position between the socially disreputable patterns of addiction and the publicly applauded habits of artistic production. Because of this ambiguity, it is frequently difficult to differentiate between a collector's creative passion and his or her compulsive consumption. This distinction is all the more difficult given that collecting answers a personal need through alienated, impersonal objects. It becomes as impossible for anyone other than the collector to understand the collection's importance as it is for the collector to have a balanced view toward it. Collections are thus unique works of art since they can never be finished—*must* never be finished, for completion would mark the death of the self seeking completion in the act of collection.

Therefore, as I sit here, writing this essay on a cold, wet, winter day, five thousand miles from my videos, do I miss my collection? Yes—but not because of the titles I cannot watch. I have access to a large library of titles which includes many in my collection, and which I am free to use with impunity. But they are not *mine* as a figurative extension of my body and personality, physical projections of my desires and fears. What I miss is the collection itself, its existence as a set of objects in space which provide a potential that I control. Like the discs and tapes in which they are mysteriously encased, the films in my collection have become decorative additions to the chairs, tables, shelves, and carpets which form the familiar backdrop to their unfolding. A title in my collection is only truly "mine" when experienced in those surroundings, reflecting and echoing off its silent companions, or waiting to be transformed into a flow of images and sounds. In this quest to retrieve a lost part of myself, the same title experienced elsewhere becomes either a thin reminder of a totality it can only approximate, or a painful intimation of what cannot be retrieved. That completion can only be accomplished by savoring the objects themselves, which

© C. Tashiro

It is difficult to differentiate between creative passion and compulsive consumption.

ultimately express only collecting, a process that always ends with the promise "to be continued. . . . "

■ Charles Tashiro is a Research Associate at USC's Annenberg Center for Communication. He is the author of *Design, History and the Perfect Image* (forthcoming, University of Texas Press). (ctashiro@rcf.usc.edu)

Notes

With many thanks to S & J.

1. Walter Benjamin, "Unpacking My Library," in *Illuminations* (New York: Schocken Books, 1968), pp. 59–67. For example: ". . . so that you may be ready to share with me a bit of the mood—it is certainly not an elegiac mood but, rather, one of anticipation—which these books arouse in a genuine collector. For such a man is speaking to you, and on closer scrutiny he proves to be speaking only about himself" (59).
2. "For inside [the collector] there are spirits, or at least little genii, which have seen to it that for a collector—and I mean a real collector, a collector as he ought to be—ownership is the most intimate relationship that one can have to objects. Not that they come alive in him; it is he who lives in them." Benjamin, p. 67.
3. Benjamin described this ordering tendency in book collections in the following terms:

   > For what else is this collection but a disorder to which habit has accommodated itself to such an extent that it can appear as order? . . . if there is a counterpart to the confusion of a library, it is the order of its catalogue.
   >
   > Thus there is in the life of a collector a dialectical tension between the poles of disorder and order. Naturally, his existence is tied to many other things as well: to a very mysterious relationship to ownership, . . . also, to a relationship to objects which does not emphasize their functional, utilitarian value—that is, their usefulness—but studies and loves them as the scene, the stage of their fate. The most profound enchantment for the collector is the locking of individual items within a magic circle in which they are fixed as the final thrill, the thrill of acquisition, passes over them . . . for a true collector the whole background of an item adds up to a magic encyclopedia whose quintessence is the fate of his object. Benjamin, pp. 59–60.

4. "This or any other procedures is merely a dam against the spring tide of memories which surges toward any collector as he contemplates his possession." Benjamin, p. 59.
5. "The book borrower of real stature . . . proves himself to be an inveterate collector of books . . . by his failure to read these books." Benjamin, p. 62.

The Ministry of Illusion
Nazi Cinema and Its Afterlife
ERIC RENTSCHLER

German cinema of the Third Reich still provokes extreme reactions. "Never before and in no other country," observes Wim Wenders, "have images and language been abused so unscrupulously as here." Eric Rentschler's analysis of the sophisticated media culture of this period demonstrates in an unprecedented way the potent and destructive powers of film.

"Rentschler—one of America's finest scholars of German cinema—has given us a lucid, passionate book."
—DAVID BORDWELL

ERIC RENTSCHLER is Professor of Film Studies at the University of California, Irvine.
41 halftones • $25.00 / £16.50 paper
$60.00 / £39.95 cloth

Harvard University Press
US: 800 448 2242 UK: 0171 306 0603
www.hup.harvard.edu

CINEMATERNITY
Film, Motherhood, Genre
LUCY FISCHER

Noting that motherhood is a common metaphor for film production, Lucy Fischer undertakes the first investigation of how the topic of motherhood presents itself throughout a wide range of film genres. Fischer defies gender-based classifications to show how motherhood has played a fundamental role in the overall cinematic experience.

"This engaging book makes for a unique contribution to film and women's studies. With its emphasis on the interaction between the motif of motherhood and the conventions of a variety of cinematic genres, the discussion of individual films attains admirable complexity and depth. Lucy Fischer puts forward intelligent arguments and writes in a literate, down-to-earth style."
—Virginia Wexman

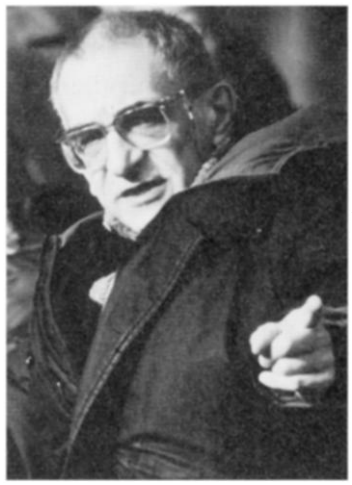
Paper: $14.95 ISBN 0-691-03774-4 Cloth: $39.50 ISBN 0-691-03775-2

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS
AVAILABLE AT FINE BOOKSTORES OR DIRECTLY FROM THE PUBLISHER:
800-777-4726 • WORLD WIDE WEB SITE: HTTP://PUP.PRINCETON.EDU

Paul Coates

The Sense of an Ending

Reflections on Kieślowski's Trilogy



Krzysztof Kieślowski's films have long resisted categorization. For the author of this piece, such Polish features as *Camera Buff*, *Blind Chance*, and *No End* had a paradoxical, teasing ability to be political without endorsing political melodramas, without dissipating the air of reality by dividing Polish society into angelic dissidents and demonic Party members, as the New Wave Polish poet and essayist Adam Zagajewski complained most Solidarity sympathizers did. This ability took them beyond "the cinema of moral unrest," a term that was nevertheless piquantly apposite for his work. Even *The Scar*, his 1976 debut feature so often termed "political," seemed rather to fuse politics with a fascinated tragic character study of a manager's fatal flaw—his urge to fix lives. The slightly misshapen quality of the film's screenplay surely reflects its groping beyond ready-made schemas of understanding. Pungently independent, corrosive of such schemas, Kieślowski's works almost court misunderstanding.

Subsequent screenplays may have been more polished, but the misunderstandings have lingered, and not just in Poland; in 1994, Tony Rayns wondered "how much of the current critical backlash against the director is founded on a mishearing of his tone of voice?" One is tempted to argue that the fame of the "late" Kieślowski films—the adjective justified by his proclaimed retirement after *Red*—is the one Rilke deemed a sum of misconceptions. But if "mystery" is a keyword in the film-maker's own discourse about his films, a full understanding may not feasible. A film about the three watchwords of the French Revolution may look political, but billing it "*Three Colours*" pulls the flag over politics, draping them with idiosyncrasy. And while these co-productions' gloss might seemingly make them more "French" than "Polish," and disconcert admirers of the "grittier"

early Kieślowski, may not gloss itself be a form of the separating glass obsessively shattered from one film to another? If *Three Colours* offers a deeply personal take on political aspiration, perhaps only equally personal reflections can even hope to begin to do it justice. Where understanding proves elusive, analysis may be condemned—or freed—to be essayistic. Such at least is the suspicion animating this piece, the ruminations of a quondam Polonist and student of Polish politics who now teaches film.

Love or Nothing: *Blue*

Alain Resnais once remarked puckishly that of the basic senses to which cinema appeals—sight and sound—sound matters more, for it is easier to shut one's eyes than to stop up one's ears. When Julie, the protagonist of *Blue,* loses her husband Patrice and her child in a car crash, all she wants to do is close out the world. She arranges to sell her house, first summons then rejects the love of her husband's friend Olivier, moves to an apartment, moves again when Olivier locates her, refuses interviews, and seeks to destroy her husband's last score—which is probably also her own, since rumor deemed her the writer of his music. (The question of whether or not she really was could become an irritant, but fortunately is not obtrusive: Kieślowski's approach reverses that of the eager reporter, and the vagueness finally does not seem to matter.) "You won't miss me," she tells Olivier, leaving too abruptly for him to get dressed and follow. Julie's shattering is imaged in that of the hospital window breaking, as if spontaneously, after the doctor announces her bereavement. His tiny reflection in her large pupil as she regains consciousness is no mannerist conceit, but indicates how small and distant the world now is in her eyes. The breaking glass may have metaphorical force, but the next moment recalls Kieślowski's stated distaste for metaphor: a cut shows that Julie has shattered a window to distract a nurse, gain access to the pharmacy, and take an overdose. She crams the pills in her mouth but cannot swallow.

Again and again in *Blue,* Julie closes her eyes, retreating to an inwardness of music as reflections play around her blue-lit face, outward manifestations of her otherworldliness. Again and again, however, noise jolts her into the world. Indeed, at times the film seems to have been scored more by John Cage than Zbigniew Preisner. Noise is the offscreen, the invisible, the danger Julie wants to shut out, the racket as a street brawl safely watched from her apartment window percolates up the staircase, with clattering feet and frenzied beating on her door ending in the swish of something (someone?) being dragged away. Noise is the squeaking of the mice that terrified her in childhood and are back again now, in the room next door. It is the aftershock of the car crash to which she reacts with melancholic mourning, her conflicting urges to shatter and preserve the self—to let violence do its worst and yet find protection—issuing in the compromise formations of symptomatic wounding of a body part (scraping her hand along a wall), symbolic self-destruction (watching a garbage van chew over the last score), or burying oneself alive. In *Touching the Rock,* his remarkable autobiographical account of descent into blindness, John Hull—a Religious Education Professor who lost his sight in 1983—argues that sound "has absence built into it as its counterfoil, whereas sight does not. Sound is always bringing us into the presence of nothingness." Viewed thus, Julie's periodic entries into pure sound are dips into nothingness, like her recurrent plunges into water, and the uncannily silent images of the bungee jumpers on the TV set at her mother's nursing home are transformations of Julie herself, leaping into the abyss yet always stopping just short of death. Channeling the violence, Julie herself becomes abrupt, intransigent; a would-be interviewer says she has become rude. "Now I have only one thing to do: nothing," she tells her mother. But though she immerses herself repeatedly in the blindness mythologically linked to music, she always opens her eyes. Shutting noise out risks shutting oneself out of life, a metaphorical implication rendered image—as if by dreamwork—when she opens the door in the silence after the staircase fracas, asks if anyone's there, then hears the draught slam her own door, condemning her to a night on the landing. The antithesis of nothingness is, of course, love. Hence in the passage from 1 Corinthians 13 set to music by Patrice/Julie, nothingness summons forth love, its opposite, in the verse that states "If I have not charity, I am nothing." The antithesis is at the film's heart, though Kieślowski's penchant for "asymmetrical composition," noted by the Polish critic Tadeusz Szyma, reserves its explicit formulation for the end.

Kieślowski's film sensitizes us to sound, tempts us to watch with eyes closed, but for all the identification with Julie's numbness, in the end it shows her wakening from a trance. What wakes her has the rudeness of noise, of all awakenings; as the great 19th-century Polish poet Cyprian Norwid remarked in his

Blue: Juliette Binoche

essay "Silence," a sleeper cannot be woken gently. For Kieślowski, as for Norwid, silence is *a part of speech*. Julie's awakening comes when she dreams of Patrice's infidelity, the illusoriness of her supposed happiness. Is it significant that the episode's keyword—*liberté*—becomes visible at this point, as she visits the Palais de Justice where Patrice's lover works? Negatively free initially, nothing left to lose, Julie sees freedom reconjugated into liberty to love, the lifting of mourning. She may flirt with death one last time, plunging into the cool blue swimming pool and remaining underwater, but in the end she comes up again, coughing. (Blue may be the color of day for night—of the night of so much of the film's early part—but it is only the cousin of darkness, not darkness itself.) After that plunge, however, she will go to Olivier as the music heard only in snatches up to this point flowers majestically around images that are a roll call of the film's characters. Even when down, seemingly out, music can sustain one, as it had the busker who—in one of the film's jokier moments—is dropped off at the streetside by a patron's limousine. It may be unfortunate that Zbigniew Preisner's slightly conventional score does not quite rise to the occasion, its lack of the plangency achieved in *The Double Life of Veronique* rendering somewhat coy the reference to Van Den Budenmeyer (his pseudonym), but it is perhaps fitting that sound finally takes a back seat to the images magnificently scrolling across the dark, across the mind of Julie, with whom we end. She can open her eyes again: the worst is over.

White: Julie Delpy and Zbigniew Zamachowski (top); Delpy (middle); Zamachowski with Janusz Gajos as Mikołaj (bottom)

Firing Blanks: *White*

The humor present only intermittently in *Blue* has full play in the mordant *White*. The two films' moods intersect as tangentially as its characters, Julie peeking for a moment into the courtroom—and into the trilogy's future—as Karol, the film's unhero, pleads his case against divorce. But if in *Blue* a joke can accompany death—Julie's husband repeating its punch line as he expires—perhaps humor needs to be taken more seriously. *White* does so. Karol Karol—the name a homage to Chaplin, Kieślowski says—a hairdresser divorced and rendered penniless (and impotent) by his French wife Dominique, returns to Poland, amasses a fortune by upstaging land speculators, then lures Dominique there with a report of his death and the bait of a rich legacy. Once in Poland she is accused of Karol's murder and incarcerated, as helpless before the law as Karol had been in France: *égalité*—which means getting even—has been achieved. The end shows us Karol, a tangible unperson, peering through binoculars at Dominique's cell window as she pantomimes—among other things—the placement of a ring on her finger.

Just as each section of *The Decalogue* activates several of the Ten Commandments, so each portion of *Three Colours* arguably revolves around more than one of the hallowed revolutionary watchwords, dramatizing both its own ostensible keyword and—in undertones—those of the other sections. *Liberté*, tragically achieved through loss of husband and child, has *égalité* as one subtext (Julie may have composed her husband's scores) and *fraternité* as another (to be exact—sisterhood, particularly with the prostitute whom Julie befriends). In *White,* meanwhile, Karol achieves the absolute *liberté* of the corpse and benefits from the Polish *fraternité* that abets his plot.

Initially devastated by his divorce, Karol busks in the Métro, playing on his comb the hit—"It is the Last Sunday"—that romanticized suicide for interwar Poles. The song enables a passerby to recognize a compatriot. There is *fraternité* as well as *égalité*. Recognition may be prompted by something we do not yet know: Karol's new friend, Mikołaj, is himself suicidal. Mikołaj smuggles Karol back to Poland in his suitcase (a bumpy ride, since thieves abduct Karol and are angry to find the anticipated loot a mere battered Pole with a two-franc piece in his pocket); wishing to spare his family's feelings by masking his suicide, he offers Karol a fee to kill him. Down in a subway again—the then-incomplete Warsaw one—Karol fires a blank, giving his friend the second life that so obsesses Kieślowski. "Firing blanks" could indeed be deemed the film's leitmotif. Mikołaj nevertheless presses the killing fee on Karol and helps found the business Karol wills to Dominique after feigning his own death. (Since each step eastwards increases deprivation—a theme to which I will return—a Russian corpse simulates the dead Karol.) At last the Pole has an object desirable to Westerners: capital. After Karol's mock funeral, Dominique finds him in her hotel bed, but the next morning he slips out; a complex conspiracy instigated by Karol has incriminated her in his death, and police burst in. The *égalité* Karol achieves is the effective revenge that precludes further retaliation. Although a single plan executes his desires for revenge upon and recovery of Dominique, the final tableau of him smiling through tears at her prison window is paralyzed by the fact that those desires clash. The ending's *egalité* is stalemate. Kieślowski's own description of it as happy may seem ironic, but its enigmatic art-cinema openness is nevertheless the loophole through which Dominique will escape to appear still alive, outside Poland, at the close of *Red.*

White is the only "Polish" film in Kieślowski's trilogy. Read allegorically, it dramatizes Polish fears of exclusion from Europe (fears that ramify into ones of "a second Yalta"), and thus posits and taps a ghostly persistence of the "Aesopian" reading habit once so widespread among Polish filmgoers, adept at decoding the parables directors used to outwit the censor. Is Kieślowski counting on the habit's persistence or not? Is he even counting on its persistence in the same form as Karol, officially dead but impotently present? While addressing a Western audience, *White* simultaneously summons up a more Polish hermeneutic too: with its double audience, it has a double life. One should not be surprised at its reverse echo of the asymmetrical structure of *The Double Life of Veronique* (this time moving from France to Poland). The hinted links between Karol's impotence and his presence on foreign soil may partly explain the opening's apparent anxiety to return home. Its image of a suitcase trundling along the conveyor belt is Hitchcockian, the inscrutable lengthy focus on something apparently innocent merely intimating its duplicity. Certainly Karol is more formidable once in Poland. He still carries scissors (not just the plaintive comb of his busking), the would-be thieves note, as he lunges at them. Working as a bodyguard in Warsaw, he tells his boss he does women's hair. "Is that all?" comes the leering reply. And consummation is achieved in a Warsaw hotel: as Karol lies in Dominique's bed and her hand extends towards him, the iconography of resurrection has sexual, not religious, resonance.

If *White* is to be read allegorically, its referent—wittingly or not—may include Kieślowski himself. Particularly interesting in its correlation of exclusion and cinema-going is the ending's echo of *A Short Film About Love*. In *White,* unlike *Blue,* the references to earlier Kieślowski motifs are not fitful but focused tellingly in the finale. Karol holding binoculars reincarnates both Tomek, the adolescent fixated on Magda in the opposite apartment block, and Magda herself, training her gaze on Tomek's window later on to discover his fate. Meanwhile, the prison and the question of Dominique's sentence for murder recall its companion piece, *A Short Film About Killing*. (For good measure, Karol, the ghost in his own life, resembles the dead protagonist of *No End.*) Tomek's erotic exclusion conjugates into that of the Pole before a Europe none too eager to grant admission. He is surely also the Polish artist. But where modern production conditions so restrict authorial "freedom" as to render it more and more the hunger-artist's ingenuity in creating legroom within chains, directors educated under Eastern Europe's political censorship may be well placed to thrive. All the same,

Kieślowski's own freedom—like Karol's—may be the phantom of liberty. "Universalization," be it the deliberate de-Polonization of much of *The Decalogue*, or—as in *Three Colours*—the use of predominantly French themes, stars, and locales, is the price of access to the European co-production money the impoverished Polish film industry so desperately needs. Intentionally or not, *White* gains force by allegorizing Kieślowski's own possible fears and feelings about working in the West. And may not its final braiding together of multiple auto-allusions also connote a directorial sense of exclusion from oneself—from the moment at which one worked most unself-consciously—that is perhaps the final transformation of the motif of the double life in Kieślowski's oeuvre? Could systematic auto-reference be the antechamber of retirement? Allegorical readers may see Karol's vanishing, his life-in-death, as prefiguring that of the maker whose initials he shares, and take Kieślowski's avowal that the trilogy is his last work all the more seriously. (Alas, there is no longer any chance that this sentence—written before Kieślowski's death—might be proven false.)

The dominant color of *White* is less assertively present than that of *Blue*—perhaps because white itself (the anti-color of impotence because of its association with absence) is less obtrusive. It is most haunting in the agonized, lyrical flashbacks of the white wedding, which surely recurs as the fetishized moment before trauma: in court we learned that the problem followed the marriage. Karol's own appearance in the final version of the flashback is too little, too late. With the wit of metaphysical poetry, the idea of whiteness even generates an interlinguistic pun: commissioned to kill Mikołaj, Karol fires a bullet French terms *blanc*. Over and above its metaphorical reference to Karol's condition, the moment parodies the falsity of cinematic death. For all the shocked and delectable Pekinpah slow motion, it is not real, as the erstwhile documentarist well knows. The thought may well reflect Kieślowski's view of his own work. Ever more virtuoso variations on past themes dent reality less and less.

In *White* Karol, Kieślowski himself, and the spectator become homologous. Karol's impotence may be that of the Pole confronting locked European doors, his snipped credit card a severed life line, but even if the artist passes through them it is, like Karol, as a ghost, and he too may weep in the end as he smiles at his plot's success. And there is surely a third figure excluded here too: the viewer. Kieślowski is acutely conscious of the situation of the spectator marginalized by film's fantasy of never-ending exclusion, the impossibility of ever entering the filmic space (something whose psychoanalytic decipherment in terms of the ever-unattainable parent is sanctioned by the filmmaker's motif of frustrated love across generations). Dominique's prison window is a cinema screen. Moreover—as several critics have noted—the exquisite, strangely beguiling ending is not fully readable; there is no way of guessing what will happen next. It may haunt us just as much as it does Karol.

Signs and Wonders: *Red*

In *Red* a fashion model, Valentine, runs over a German shepherd dog she then returns to its owner, a retired judge engaged in illicit electronic eavesdropping. Their conversations culminate in his admission of the betrayal in love that started him eavesdropping (surely jealousy's obsession with the hidden, the bolting too late of the door of inattention). Meanwhile, Auguste, a law student whose experiences match the judge's with near-mystical precision, also suffers betrayal. At the film's end he is rescued from a ferry disaster, as is Valentine, inviting one to speculate that the judge may somehow have united them. *Red* sums up *Three Colours* by numbering the trilogy's other protagonists among the seven survivors.

As haunting as the ending of *White, Red*'s ending may be the best starting point for reflection. Like several other Kieślowski works, these films may seem to exist almost entirely for their final moments' iconic condensations of earlier themes. They become increasingly complex, gaining density and mass, until yielding the last image whose weight stuns their movement. Here it is one of Valentine, her hair seadrenched, caught in a freeze frame against the red of an anorak, and it recalls her earlier pose in—of all things!—a chewing gum poster, one the photographer elicited by asking her to look sorrowful. Here the sorrow of mere image becomes that of the disaster's reality. It resurrects, and redeems from commodification, the poster taken down just before the storm that seems to have swept Europe. (Only here do we discover Valentine's full name, in a TV report; the moment of naming is a turning point, followed by silence.) The two images are brought to rhyme by the camera's delving into a freeze frame of Valentine beside Auguste. The moment's pregnancy suggests

Red: Irène Jacob (top); Jacob with Samuel Lebihan (middle), and Jean-Louis Trintignant as the judge (bottom)

that he will be the one beside her when she wakes and smiles in 40 years' time, as foretold in the judge's dream. The camera's subsequent zeroing in on Valentine identifies with the judge's look, reminding us of his exclusion and her status as the girl he never met. Excising the more fortunate Auguste emphasizes the judge's exclusion from a promesse du bonheur whose distant glow warms him nevertheless. After all, Auguste too is now a judge, and his life has echoed the other's—with their dropped law books falling open at the right page before an exam, their lucklessness in love. Happiness achieved through one's double may be more than vicarious.

The finale's doubling and double, bitter-sweet perspective is fitting, for in it the scales of justice—of the law that haunts Kieślowski—achieve the balance permitting closure, the film-maker's own Prospero-like retirement. The balance also encompasses the contrasting voices of the judge and Valentine which embodies Kieślowski's own split monologue. The judge may be retired, but Valentine switches off her answering machine, desiring peace, that Kieślowski keyword. The judge's final retreat from surveillance echoes Kieślowski's own two withdrawals—from documentary in the early 80s, from feature-making a decade later. The deepening dialogues between Valentine

and the judge finally excavate the bedrock of his suffering during the storm after the fashion show, though its lightning had flickered already in the flashbulbs around the catwalk. Valentine guesses his trauma as he had guessed hers. When the judge mentions seeing his girlfriend's treachery in a mirror, a crash on the sound track catapults us into the past—the auditory, disembodied realm he inhabits—as mentally he shatters the reflection. Broken glass, that crucial Kieślowski motif, connotes unpredictability, catastrophe, the cost of relationship. Once the judge has confessed his eavesdropping, barrages of stones assail his windowpanes. Valentine's hand on the departing judge's car window imprints both the desire for relationship and its impossibility.

Red ends, much as it began, on an image of red. Like *Blue* and *White,* its references to its key color cluster most densely around the opening, with red proliferating in cars, café awnings, chairs, and so on. Where the "Polish" Kieślowski might have headlined each part by key concept, highlighting key colors instead may seem more attractive to a self-consciously "post-ideological" era. Paradoxically, however, it hampers entry to the film. Mindful of the title, one cannot help noting the carrier of the keynote color rather than the whole image in which it appears, and even when the color's almost showy initial multiplication thins out, instances can still irritate. This is, I think, deliberate. Like the judge, Kieślowski will not be easy of access: the virtuosity is a smoke screen, apparent accessibility concealing deeper reserve. It is like Valentine's advertising poster, which finally metamorphoses into something deeply private, a transformation eased by its removal from the public domain, its taking down. And so, as the film deepens, dwelling increasingly within the judge's home, the key color might be said to shift to brown. Here, as in *A Short Film About Killing*, the privilege accorded red is that of the visible young female, but there is also the alternative brown world—the "brown study"—the judge inhabits, and as relationships deepen it sinks into near-total darkness. The recurrent single color seems to represent distraction, and imply that the links between characters are merely coincidental (Kieślowski underlines his disinterest in politics by refusing to connect red with the Communism that pollutes it for many Poles).

And what of the keyword of *Red, fraternité*? An early image shows Valentine so moved by her brother's image in an article on drugs that she touches it, as she later does the judge's car window, seeking to nullify distance, make media mediate. At 15, her brother Marc had learned he was not his father's son. What devastated him broadened her definition of family: strangers can be brothers. "You can't live your brother's life for him," the judge says, the apparent truism echoing Cain's truculent demand. Valentine, however, *is* her brother's keeper (Biblical morality deepens and gives substance to the revolutionary one). She tells the judge, "People aren't bad . . . they may be weak sometimes." Kieślowski may be partly of the judge's party and ironize her status as "a breath of fresh air"—"a touch of freshness," after all, is her gum poster's slogan—but she really does function as such, and can also be ironic, asking the judge who said he wanted nothing if he's still breathing. Valentine wants to act, to grasp what needs to be done. For the judge, however, her very being is action: she need only be. Since being is breathing, one need only breathe to find freshness enter in.

In *The Decalogue,* a young man materialized repeatedly at crucial moments in the protagonists' lives. Many critics have likened him to an angel. If he is, he is a recording one. Is the judge his older incarnation—the impotent angel unable to alter the lives he tracks? Is his impotence perhaps mocked by his suggested status of demiurge changing lives by flipping a coin? His drifting across sound waves can recall the angels of *Wings of Desire*. But for Kieślowski, unlike Wenders, the helpless recording angel does not enter humanity, but confronts it in the one who intervenes—Valentine, who picks up the dog she has run over, visits the judge after his trial for eavesdropping, and thinks of Auguste's flat battery when obliviousness to anything but his betrayal causes him to leave his lights on. If the recurrent hunched pensioner seeking to drop a bottle in a recycling bin had seemed a mannerism earlier in the trilogy, repetition with a difference justifies the image: Valentine helps insert the bottle, and its smashing is noise as musical reprise. One long film moving toward a finale, *Three Colours* cannot be judged prematurely, however much the distribution mechanisms that permit viewing of only one or two parts court misunderstanding. And if the recurrence of Van Den Budenmeyer can irritate, Kieślowski's own reprises are fully justified, and nowhere more so than in the last image's long-resounding final chord.

■ Paul Coates teaches in the Department of English at the University of Aberdeen, in Scotland. He is currently editing a collection of essays on Kieślowski for Flicks Books.

William Johnson

Toyoda and the Challenge of Representation

Snow Country

Shiro Toyoda began his directing career in 1929, just after Ozu and just before Naruse, and made several films that can stand comparison with the best of his contemporaries'—indeed, his body of work is in some ways both more varied and more unusual than theirs.[1] Yet Toyoda is little known in the West. And although he was recognized as one of Japan's leading film-makers by the 1950s, and some of his films were box-office hits, his route to recognition even in Japan was slow and frustrating.

As a teenager Toyoda had hopes of becoming a playwright, but was told he stood a better chance of making a living in the cinema. He entered the Shochiku studios at age 18 as an assistant and writer to

Yasujiro Shimazu, a film-maker who popularized the modern drama. His first film (*Painted Lips*, 1929) impressed the studio, but in 1930, after two box-office failures, he was demoted to assistant director. Five years passed before his next chance to direct, and it was only in 1937, after moving to the Toho studio, that he achieved his first critical and commercial success with *Young People*.

Toyoda's films have a cumulative rather than an immediate impact. His style is eclectic, sometimes varying widely from film to film; it avoids both the sustained bravura often found in Kurosawa and Ichikawa and the sustained absence of bravura seen in late Ozu. Since his themes and his attitude toward them also resist easy pigeonholing, Toyoda cannot be reduced to an oversimplified label along the lines of late Ozu (Confucianism, stasis), Naruse (pessimism), Mizoguchi (Buddhism, sinuous long takes), or Kurosawa (Western-style action). When Donald Richie sums up Toyoda's distinctiveness in two words, the result is an oxymoron: "sardonic compassion."[2] And even this distinctiveness is not immediately obvious. While Toyoda was quite capable of producing technical fireworks, touching off unexpected laughter, and generating intense emotions, he relied primarily on a contained but steady build-up of characters and situations.

In some ways, Toyoda comes close to the image of a classical Hollywood director such as Wyler, Ford, or Cukor: many of his films are based on literary works,[3] and commercial pressures affected several of his choices or assignments.[4] As a craftsman he placed great importance on continuity and coherence, and often used the master-shot approach to sequences. He also had a reputation as an actors' director. "Casting . . . is the most important of all," he said. "It is in fact the key to the success of the film. What is important is the unity of the actors' playing—all must act in the same style. More important than dialogue delivery is to get the right mood for the actor, to get him into it, and to help him project it."[5] One could say that Toyoda subscribed to the principles and practices of the representational narrative, yet his generally quiet approach contains an arsenal of subtle and provocative strategies. His literary adaptations are a springboard to experiences quite different from those of the printed word, and his concern for stylistic unity is counterbalanced by an awareness of the concrete, the unex-

The Wild Geese

Spring on the Islands

pected, and the contradictory. Many critics have seen the representational narrative as a source of illusory comfort to the viewer and as a reinforcement of the ideological status quo. Toyoda's films challenge that view, throwing new light on the strengths and possibilities of the dominant cinematic form.

Representation vs. Presentation

Any discussion of representation in the work of a Japanese film-maker whose films spanned the 1930s and the 50s must take note of Noël Burch's thesis that the finest Japanese films were made in the 30s, when (based on the traditions of Japan's performing and pictorial arts) the prevailing style featured distance, decentering, discontinuity, and flatness—presentation rather than representation.[6] After World War II, says Burch, film-makers began to copy the prevailing style of films from the victorious United States, so that most Japanese films of the 50s no longer truly challenged viewers but lulled them with the cinematic devices of bourgeois ideology.

The flaw in this argument is revealed clearly by Burch himself when he sums up, with emphasis: "*What was a mass cultural attitude in Japan was a deeply subversive vanguard practice in the Occident.*"[7] In other words, for Japanese viewers the presentational style of 1930s films was as "natural" as the American representational style was to Western viewers. Judged by Burch's narrow critical standard, the value of 30s Japanese films in the West derives solely from their exoticism.

The two pre-Occupation films of Toyoda that I have seen (*Young People* and *Spring on the Islands*) do indeed contain a preponderance of medium and long shots, some of them held for a fairly long time, but there is no noticeable decentering, unusual discontinuity, or flatness. Here, and even more in his later films that are superficially more Western in technique, Toyoda uses other means to keep the viewer slightly off balance, drawn both toward and away from the diegesis. These are cumulatively far more provocative, even to Western viewers, than "a mass cultural attitude."

Signs of the Unexpected

The most obvious of Toyoda's provocative strategies is his use of the unexpected, both in detailed incidents and in the general unpredictability of the

Snow Country

narrative. Appropriately enough, this strategy can be found even in what may be his weakest and most commercial film, *Legend of the White Serpent.* Toyoda's first film in color, it was a coproduction with Hong Kong, had special effects by Eiji Tsuburaya (who worked on *Godzilla* and other science fantasies), and was based on a pastiche of a Chinese folk tale. A poor apprentice, Hsu, falls in love with a beautiful lady, Pai, who appears to requite his love while causing his arrest for theft. It turns out that Pai is a spirit who sometimes takes the form of snake, but the extent of her duplicity is left open until the end.

Meanwhile, two scenes demonstrate the kind of unexpected stroke that Toyoda uses to more far-reaching effect in other films. An itinerant monk warns Hsu that he's possessed by a devil and gives him three charms to burn. When Hsu hesitates to burn the third charm, Pai herself does so—and it's the monk, heard outside chanting, who grunts and collapses. The second, apparently gratuitous stroke occurs when Hsu has fallen unconscious and Pai has gone for help to a

wizard. Her maid, also a snake spirit, is watching over Hsu when she suddenly smacks him on the forehead—to swat a fly.

The irruption of such earthy, comic elements jolts the viewer out of any tendency to drift along with the fantasy. But even more provocative is the unpredictability of the film's ending. Pai commits enough misdeeds to earn a *Fatal Attraction* comeuppance in a Hollywood film, yet *Legend* takes quite a different turn. When another monk warns Hsu that Pai is a snake, he replies that all women have part snake in them and men love it, whereupon he and Pai float hand-in-hand up to heaven. While this—seen across a temporal and cultural divide—may appear both patronizing and laughable, it points toward Toyoda's strength in dealing with the plight of women in Japanese society: he did not assume that the alternative to demonizing them was to treat them as angels. His avoidance of the all-or-nothing fallacy plays an important part throughout his film-making career. It is particularly crucial in his handling of political topics.

Among Toyoda's more significant surprises is his sudden introduction of political elements in seemingly personal dramas. *The Twilight Story*, about the doomed love between a prostitute and a teacher in 1936, includes air-raid drills, military drills for student cadets, and references to prostitutes being shipped to the troops in Manchuria; the bartender in *The Diplomat's Mansion* turns out to be the diplomat's grandson, whose political record as a former radical student denies him a graduate's career.

In *Snow Country*, adapted from Yasunari Kawabata's novel first published in 1937, Toyoda adds references to the young military officers' uprising of February 26, 1936, in which several politicians were assassinated. There are radio reports and discussions about them by people at the hotel in the northern Honshu resort town where the action takes place. Yet Toyoda does not make this an overt attack on militarism. In one sense, of course, the whole film—which deals with a young geisha's struggle to survive while confronted with family obligations and an impossible love—is a rejection of militarist values. And even though the two main characters ignore the uprising, it serves as a reminder that the personal does not exist in a social vacuum.

The political elements in Toyoda's films go far beyond window dressing, but they stop short of sending a message; they serve to provoke thought rather than manipulate it. Because they irrupt into personal narratives, they stand out more vividly than in overtly political films.

Renewing the Expected

Like many other film-makers, Toyoda returns to certain themes and elements throughout his career. His approach is unusual, however, in that these recurrences arouse little or no sense of repetition. Even when there are only minor changes to a basic situation, each film presents it in a strikingly fresh perspective. This is notable in films that explore the actions and reactions of similar characters to the same theme, revealing them in an amplified or antithetical light.

Such explorations often involve two familiar Japanese types: what Gregory Barrett calls the Weak Passive Male and the All-Suffering Female.[8] Toyoda reminds us that there is no necessary one-to-one relation between archetype and character, since the same character may shift from one archetype to another (or to none at all) in different social circumstances. This is made clear for male characters by Toyoda's frequent casting of Hisaya Morishige, who might be called a master of Weak Passivity.

In *Marital Relations* and *A Cat, Shozo and Two Women,* the Morishige character has no job and behaves like a child, treating his lover as his mother in the former and eventually rejecting women altogether in the latter. His small role as an assemblyman and innkeeper in *Snow Country* is a pivot between the worlds of women and men: he clowns rather childishly with geishas at a party, but with other men he briskly discusses the political and economic news. *Hotelman's Holiday* and a cameo role in *The Diplomat's Mansion* focus on the business side of the Morishige character's life, dealing with men rather than women, and here he reveals himself as resourceful. But in *Madame Aki*, though the character is now "promoted" to CEO, Toyoda shows us only his petulant behavior with his wife and other women. The Weak Passive Male reaches his final stage in Toyoda's last film with Morishige, *Twilight Years*. Retired from the world of men and afflicted with senile dementia, he reverts to infancy and mistakes his daughter-in-law for his mother.

The All-Suffering Female shows even more variety in Toyoda's films. As Tadao Sato points out, Japa-

Twilight Years

nese films feature a large proportion of bar girls and geishas (along with some nurses and teachers) because these occupations have offered Japanese women the most opportunities for social interaction.[9] Toyoda's films are unusual in also providing central and active female roles—a doctor (*Spring on the Islands*), schoolgirls (*Young People* and *Sweet Sweat*), and married women (*A Cat, Shozo and Two Women*; *The Twilight Story*; *Madame Aki;* and *Twilight Years*). While most of the wives end up accepting the compromises of marriage, they are far from doormats and they do not suffer in silence. Toyoda makes skillful use of domestic quarrels to highlight relations between the sexes: the two major quarrels in *Madame Aki* and the one in *Twilight Years*, each prolonged by the husband's childishness, are as hilarious as they are painful.

More importantly, Toyoda develops the "usual" female roles far beyond the males in complexity. The bar-girl mother in *Young People* is a minor character, seen negatively from the viewpoint of her teen daughter and her teacher. Mari, the young bar girl in *The Diplomat's Mansion*, has a larger but not central role; though seen positively—as lively and generous—she remains somewhat one-dimensional. Umeko, the 36-year-old bar girl in *Sweet Sweat*, combines the positive and negative attributes of her predecessors and, as the protagonist, takes them much further. Selfish and generous, savvy and foolish, cheerful and desperate, fearless and vulnerable, she imposes herself as a kind of Mother Courage of Tokyo's *shitamachi* (traditional working-class district).

Toyoda takes what might be called equally close but differently angled views in three films about geishas (one of them frankly a prostitute) in love with married men. The detailed incidents of each film differ, as do the characters of the three geishas: Choko in *Marital Relations* is spontaneous and resourceful; Komako in *Snow Country* has frequent shifts of mood but is the most realistic of the three; Oyuki in *The Twilight Story* is the most gentle. But those changes alone could easily have left a sense of staleness. Toyoda brings freshness to each unequal love affair by framing it in a distinctive narrative context.

In *Snow Country*, the husband (from Tokyo) meets the geisha while on a vacation trip in northwestern Honshu. His wife never appears, and the subsidiary conflicts—which contribute to the end of the affair—involve the geisha's adoptive family. In *Marital Relations*, too, the wife never appears, but here the subsidiary conflicts—which do not end the affair—involve the husband's family. Just as *Sweet Sweat* synthesized the two earlier bar girls, *The Twilight Story* presents the subsidiary conflicts of both geisha and husband, and this time the wife appears onscreen. Instead of reworking the same situation with superficial variations, Toyoda shifts perspective from film to film, focusing each time on a different interplay of personal and social forces.

Against Conformity

Although many of Toyoda's films present traditional aspects of Japanese society, one such aspect is notable for its near absence: the harmonious Confucian family. There are variously neglectful mothers in *Young People*, *Sweet Sweat*, and *River of Forever*; a manipulative money-grubbing mother in *A Cat, Shozo and Two Women*; a father in *The Wild Geese* and a mother in *Snow Country* who both fear loss of money if their daughters break with "patrons"; a querulous father and petulant son in *Marital Relations*; a father in *Portrait of Hell* who lets his daughter burn to death; and a *ronin* (masterless samurai) in *Illusion of Blood* who murders both his wife and his father-in-law.

Toyoda also confounds another traditional expectation: that in classic Japanese films, *giri* (social obligations) will always win out over *ninjo* (human feelings). In the few Toyoda films where *giri* appears to win, the victory is ambiguous. At the end of *Snow Country*, for instance, Komako stays to take care of her disfigured foster-sister Yoko, even though they hate each other; but she's already sure that her lover will never leave his wife. When Aki in *Madame Aki* returns to her unfaithful husband after an unsuccessful attempt at an affair of her own, one major reason is that the threat from the "other woman" has dwindled into a terminal one-night stand. Akiko in *Twilight Years* reluctantly looks after her senile father-in-law because she is stuck with him; she tries to get her husband to help, but the old man no longer recognizes his son, insisting that he's a burglar.

While pressure to conform is considered a prime force of Japanese society, few of Toyoda's main characters give in to it.[10] Some avoid it by becoming social dropouts. Thus in *Marital Relations*, the rich merchant's heir forfeits his inheritance to stay with the geisha Choko, and Choko in turn forfeits her economic security to stay with him. In *A Cat, Shozo and Two Women,* the protagonist trades human relationships and security for infatuation with his cat.

In other films as well, Toyoda's characters actively resist the pressure to conform. The schoolgirl in *Young People* ignores rules, pretends she's pregnant by Mazaki, a teacher she has a crush on, and runs away from her single bar-girl mother to stay with him. He and Ms. Hashimoto, a woman teacher who loves him, try to take the girl to the latter's home, but she refuses. The film ends without a resolution as the two teachers wonder what to do. With typical ambiguity, Toyoda compares the girl's resistance to what might be called Hashimoto's resistive conformity. After a student complains about missing money, Hashimoto argues

Young People

against a proposal to search the student dorms, but a majority of the staff supports it. When the students protest against the search, Mazaki tells them that Hashimoto objected—but she now objects to his apology, reminding him sharply that she accepted the majority decision. The viewer is left to balance the virtues of personal resistance against those of sacrifice to the collective. Without being an iconoclast like Oshima, Yoshida, and other New Wave film-makers, Toyoda nevertheless subverts the viewer's traditional expectations.

Nonconformism: A Case Study in Literary Adaptation

Of all the nonconformists in Toyoda's films, the most extreme is Yoshihide (Tatsuya Nakadai) in *Portrait of Hell.* This is also the film in which Toyoda takes the most extensive liberties with a literary source. He transforms an ironic fable into an intense drama—not to blunt its implications, but to make them even sharper.

In the original story,[11] set in the Heian period around one thousand years ago, Yoshihide's extremism applies only to his pride and callousness: as the court painter to a Great Lord, he calls himself the finest painter in Japan, and when commissioned to depict hell on a screen, he asks the lord to burn a carriage with a court lady inside it as a model. The lord does so, but the lady is Yoshihide's daughter. The story is told as if by a naïve court lady who believes the lord when he explains that he burned the daughter to punish Yoshihide's pride and not, as some say, because the daughter refused his advances.

Far from reducing the two main characters to simple hero and villain, the political dimension that Toyoda adds to the film increases their complexity. In his version, Yoshihide is Korean (a reminder—in an era when Koreans suffer discrimination in Japan—that they were once among the country's leading craftspeople and were accepted into Japanese nobility). Though still proud, and callous toward his apprentices, Yoshihide now bluntly tells the lord that the people do not love him (as the courtiers maintain) and that they live in bitter misery. Yoshihide's daughter is forced to submit to the lord's advances. As a model for his screen, Yoshihide asks for a carriage to be burned with a man, not a woman, inside it, and the lord picks up the wish that he would be the man. The lord has the carriage prepared with the daughter bound inside it and demands that Yoshihide apologize or he will order it set on fire. Yoshihide refuses and dares the lord to give the order—which, though shaken, he does. Afterward Yoshihide completes the screen and hangs himself. The screen's flames come to life and consume the lord.

A supreme contradiction surges out of the scene of the burning, which captures not only the horror but also the beauty of it, as well as Yoshihide's spellbound response to both. It is night in front of the lord's palace; sparks gush upward against the dark sky, and ashes fall like languorous snow around Yoshihide as he stares toward us, his face yellowed by the flames. The scene cuts to the palace by day under actual snow, suggesting not only the cold despair that will carry Yoshihide to suicide, but also the chilly detachment that coexists in him with the heat of passion.

While Toyoda's changes to other literary sources are less obviously extensive than in *Portrait of Hell,* they often have the same effect of making a more complex and challenging impact. For example, Junichiro Tanizaki's *A Cat, Shozo and Two Women*[12] ends with the first wife now feeling affection toward the cat and ready to return to Shozo. In the film, which is both more comic and more mordant than the novella, the wife's last gesture to the cat is to throw her out of a second-floor window—there is no hint of a reconciliation. Toyoda apparently had no inhibitions about freely adapting respected living authors such as Tanizaki and Kawabata.

Narrative Strategies of Provocation

The double force of Toyoda's "sardonic compassion" makes itself felt most strongly when, without using any obvious alienating devices, he provokes the viewer into what might be called an attentive recoil. Both *Marital Relations* and *Snow Country* irritated me somewhat as I watched them. Despite their obvious attractions, including lively movement and frequent humor in the former, suspense and extraordinary deep-snow locations in the latter, I was able to appreciate them fully only in retrospect. My irritation could be attributed to a cultural gap: in both films a (Suffering) woman devotes herself to an unsuitable (Weak) man. This situation is hardly uncommon in the Japanese cinema, however, and I don't

Marital Relations

usually hold individual films accountable for it (I felt no such irritation when watching *The Twilight Story*, which takes an even bleaker view of the same situation).

My discomfort with *Marital Relations* and *Snow Country* arose from their narrative structure. First of all, both narratives rely in different ways on repetition. *Marital Relations* is a series of cycles, each of which begins with geisha Choko and penniless playboy Ryukichi happy together and ends (usually because of Ryukichi's weakness) with a setback or rift. The narrative is full of incident without progression, and the film ends with the couple about to embark on yet another cycle.

Snow Country has two levels of repetition, one based on the artist Shimamura's visits to and departures from the northeast, the other on the geisha Komako's emotional fluctuations in response to each visit. The latter is additionally challenging for two reasons: Shimamura, being reserved, appears more consistent than Komako, so that the responsibility for the ups and downs of their relationship seems to rest on her; and Komako's situation is repeated in capsule form by her fellow geisha Kikuyu, who also breaks with her patron and loses her lover.

While repetition confronts viewers with the narrow scope of life open to these women, character focus plunges viewers into their lives. In both *Marital Relations* and *Snow Country*, the film stays with the All-Suffering Female when the lovers are separated. Thus the viewer (male as well as female) has to share the woman's constraints and recurrent frustrations rather than the man's freedom. At one and the same time, then, the films attract the viewer by seducing him with their visual and auditory pleasures, and repel him by imprisoning him within their confining structures.

Sympathy Without Identification . . .

The push-pull dynamics of Toyoda's films virtually exclude any consistently subjective point of view. Although *Marital Relations* and *Snow Country* are centered territorially on their female protagonists,

Toyoda avoids technical devices such as voice-over commentary or subjective camera angle that might force the viewer's sympathy. Whenever the lovers are together he usually films them in fluid two-shots, with shifts of camera angle balancing shifts of the characters, and thus makes the viewer an attentive rather than a detached observer. Attentiveness encourages sympathy with the less fortunate character—the woman—but also leaves the viewer free to conclude that Choko in *Marital Relations* is devoting herself to a man who isn't worthy of her, while Komako in *Snow Country* is wasting her emotions on a love with no future. Sympathy stops well short of uncritical identification.

Madame Aki may seem to be an exception at first, as the film focuses on Aki and gives her fairly extensive voice-over commentaries that continue over a scene in which she does not appear. Soon, however, the voiceovers dwindle away and other characters come to the foreground; while Aki remains central and the focus of sympathy, she is now viewed as objectively as the others. Some films have more than one focal character: *The Twilight Story* follows both the teacher Junpei and the prostitute Oyuki into their family situations; former radical student Shinichi begins and ends *The Diplomat's Mansion*, and is the link among nearly all of the characters, while bar owner Senko, mistress of Shinichi's father, is the narrative center.

Toyoda's most widespread means of keeping sympathy clear of identification, however, is to involve his central characters in unpleasant, even repulsive situations. In the only two films that have a single dominant and consistently likable character—Otama in *The Wild Geese* and Akiko in *Twilight Years*—the unpleasantness lies in what they experience. (Akiko, for example, is kept continuously on the run by the demands of her senile father-in-law, whose urine and feces she is required to clean up.) In most films, however, it is the sympathetic central character who creates the unpleasant situations. With Yoshihide in *Portrait of Hell,* Toyoda pushes this contradiction to—and for many viewers, no doubt, over—the limit. For a specific example of unexpected unpleasantness, however, consider this scene from *Pilgrimage at Night.*

Pilgrimage at Night

The film focuses on writer Kensaku's attempts to come to terms with the discovery that he was born from an affair between his mother and her father-in-law. The circumstances of his birth (which could stand for any genetic attributes that are subject to prejudice) and the focus on his struggle encourage easy sympathy, but after Kensaku marries, Toyoda shifts much of that sympathy to the wife, Naoku. In one incident, far more prominent in the film than in the novel on which it is based,[13] Kensaku and Naoku are going on an outing with their housekeeper and a friend. Delayed by changing their baby, Naoku runs onto the station

platform as the train is moving. She hands the baby to the others, already on the train at the door, but can now only just keep up with them. "Go home!" snaps Kensaku, and when she keeps running, pushes her. From the moving train we see her sprawl motionless on the platform. In the book Kensaku turns to the others and exclaims in disbelief, "I pushed her!" In the film he remains silent and the housekeeper says, "You pushed her!"

. . . But Not Without Pleasure

That incident is one of the more dramatic examples of the strategies with which Toyoda punctuates his representational approach to keep (or in this case push) the viewer off balance. He jolts the viewer away from identification but not, however, away from pleasure. Indeed, one of his strategies is unexpected humor. In *Marital Relations*, for instance, when Ryukichi, dispossessed in favor of brother-in-law Keiichi, makes a last hopeless appeal to his father, he finds Keiichi in the family store ordering clerks to dust it. Ryukichi yells at him, "This is *my* dust!"

Another strategy for pleasurably jolting the viewer is the insertion of an "excessive" scene or incident. While some of these go no further than the quiet interludes found in Ozu and other Japanese filmmakers, others are more disconcerting. A scene in Senko's bar in *The Diplomat's Mansion* is suspended for more than a minute by a drunken patron's self-excoriating outburst. At the end of *Pilgrimage at Night*, when Kensaku, in retreat in the mountains, falls sick and Naoku comes to visit, there are half a dozen stag beetles crawling over his pillow; he merely says, "Meet my friends." There are no beetles in the novel.

The most extraordinary leap into excess occurs at the end of *The Twilight Story*: the narrative cuts from teacher Junpei at home with his wife, expressing guilt for having abandoned prostitute Oyuki, to Oyuki lying in hospital. Here the narrator's voice breaks in to inform us that she is hopelessly ill. The scene abruptly switches to the narrator walking along an empty street of the red-light district at night, explaining that the blackout now keeps most clients away. The film ends with a scene of wrenching beauty: a long slow dolly, slightly canted, along the shadowy facades of the brothels; at each a prostitute opens a small lighted window to smile hopefully at the camera before slipping out of frame into oblivion.

Toyoda's jolting strategies include a device—the shot/countershot—that some critics have assailed as a mainstay of bourgeois ideology in the cinema. In most cases, Toyoda uses the device without dialogue, usually at the end of an exchange, creating an unfulfilled expectation of further speech. *River of Forever* features a shot/countershot sequence with dialogue (of sorts) that Toyoda pushes to bravura excess. A terminally ill truck driver is led to believe that his nurse, departing for a brief visit home, has quit. He runs out, jumps into a parked truck, and speeds along the road beside the train that she is riding. Toyoda then cross-cuts between shots of the driver in the foreground with the nurse at the train door in the background as he tries to shout to her over the roar of the truck, and shots of the nurse in the foreground with the driver in the background as she tries to shout back over the roar of the train. Beyond any narrative metaphor in this exchange—the driver's struggle to make contact with others amid the rush toward death—there is an exuberant delight in its technical challenge. This double celebration, of film-making and of life at their most difficult moments, encapsulates the power behind Toyoda's work.

Some Final Paradoxes

Donald Richie has commented on the physicality of Toyoda's style, citing the scene in *A Cat, Shozo and Two Women* where Shozo's first wife, slipping back into the house, runs her hand reflectively along the familiar staircase balustrade. Richie also quotes Kurosawa's remark to Toyoda after he saw how the latter had handled his script for one section of *Four Love Stories*: "I described the love of these young people merely psychologically; but you've described it physiologically."[14]

In *The Wild Geese*, Toyoda uses this physicality to hammer home the personal and social pain of being the unwilling concubine of a married usurer. The front door and windows of the house that the usurer provides for Otama (Hideko Takamine) are divided by vertical wooden slats about six inches apart, and she is continually seen through them, as if behind prison bars. Other film-makers have used a similar device, but Toyoda goes further, transforming innocent ob-

Sweet Sweat

jects such as food, a parasol, and a kimono into instruments of torment.

When the usurer first comes to the house he has provided for Otama, she prepares a meal for him. He insists, despite her reluctance, on inserting a morsel of food into her mouth with his fingers—a foretaste of the other physical violation that will follow. Later, Otama is carrying a parasol when she encounters a woman whose parasol has the same pattern; this is the usurer's wife, and she glares at Otama in a fury. When Otama wears a kimono to a neighbor's home, another woman there assails her as a bloodsucker; the kimono is made from a fabric that the usurer extorted from her as interest. The woman's hands clutch at the kimono, twisting it into ugliness. Otama runs back home and pulls it off.

This approach—the use of the concrete, the unexpected, and the contradictory—remains virtually consistent throughout Toyoda's work, making even his lesser films very watchable. Although my emphasis on Toyoda's provocative strategies may suggest that his films generate wildness and confusion, their keynote is clarity. Toyoda himself usually avoids emphasis, maintaining a matter-of-fact tone even at his most disconcerting. The nearest he comes to a crowd scene is the villagers hurrying toward the fire at the end of *Snow Country*, and his only action sequence is a bandit attack on the lord's palace in *Portrait of Hell*. This is why at first sight his films can seem less adventurous than they are in reality.

While staying within the limits of the representational narrative, Shiro Toyoda uses an arsenal of devices that puncture involvement with detachment, produce unexpected shifts of tone, and forestall easy conclusions. This double approach can be more challenging than an outright rejection of narrative and/or representation, which runs a greater risk of being simplistic or hermetic. At the very least, Toyoda offers viewers a continual engagement between pleasure and provocation.

■ William Johnson is the New York Editor of *Film Quarterly*.

Key to Films Discussed

Since this is intended not as a chronology but as a convenient reference, the films are listed in alphabetical order. C=color, W=wide screen, S=scenarist. (All films without S credit were written by Toshio Yasumi.) The synopses are bare skeletons.

Cat, Shozo and Two Women, A [Neko to Shozo to futari no onna] (1956; from Junichiro Tanizaki). Shozo (Hisaya Morishige) leaves his wife Shinako (Isuzu Yamada) for younger Fukuko (Kyoko Kagawa). Shinako kidnaps his cat to try to win him back. Shozo abandons both women for the cat.

Diplomat's Mansion, The [Tokyo yawa] (1961, W; from Tsuneo Tomita). Bar manager Senko (Chikage Awashima) wants her "patron" Ryosaku, whose father was a wealthy diplomat, to sell the mansion so that she can buy a larger bar, but he refuses. When Ryosaku's son Shinichi sells the mansion for himself, Ryosaku burns it down.

Illusion of Blood [Yotsuya kaidan] (1965, C; from an early-19th-century Kabuki play by Namboku Tsuruya IV). Masterless samurai Iemon (Tatsuya Nakadai) kills his wife so that he can marry another woman. His wife's ghost drives him to his death.

Legend of the White Serpent [Byaku fujin no koi] (1956, C; from Fusao Hayashi). Fantasy set in ancient China about a mysterious love affair between a poor man, Hsu (Ryo Ikebe), and an elegant lady, Pai (Yoshiko [aka Shirley] Yamaguchi), who may be an evil spirit.

Madame Aki [Yushu heiya] (1963, CW; from Yasushi Inoue). Aki (Fujiko Yamamoto) suspects her husband Katayuki (Hisaya Morishige) of having an affair with another woman and tries to start an affair with sculptor Uojiro (Tatsuya Nakadai).

Marital Relations [Meoto zenzai] (1955; from Sakunosuke Oda). Set in 1932. A geisha, Choko (Chikage Awashima), gives up her position to live with Ryukichi (Hisaya Morishige), the feckless disinherited son of a wealthy merchant.

Pilgrimage at Night [Anya koro] (1959, W; from Naoya Shiga). Set in the 1920s. Writer Kensaku (Ryo Ikebe) discovers that he is the issue of an affair between his mother and his paternal grandfather. This affects his later marriage with Naoku (Fujiko Yamamoto), especially after her cousin Kaname (Tatsuya Nakadai) rapes her.

Portrait of Hell [Jigoku-hen] (1969, C; from Ryunosuke Akutagawa). Set around 1000. Increasing conflict between a court painter, Yoshihide (Tatsuya Nakadai), and his lord culminates in the death by burning of Yoshihide's daughter and the painter's suicide.

River of Forever [Chikuma-gawa zessho] (1967, W; S: Zenzo Matsuyama). A truck driver discovers he is dying of leukemia caused by exposure to fallout from a nuclear test.

Snow Country [Yukiguni] (1957; from Yasunari Kawabata). Set in 1936. Shimamura (Ryo Ikebe), an artist from Tokyo, visits a town in northwestern Honshu and starts an affair with the geisha Komako (Keiko Kishi).

Spring on the Islands [Kojima no haru] (1940; S: Yasutaro Yagi). A woman doctor (Shizue Natsukawa) travels around to persuade lepers to come to a leprosarium.

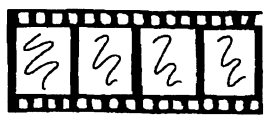
Sweet Sweat [Amai ase] (1964, W; S: Yoko Mizuki). Aging bar girl Umeko (Machiko Kyo) struggles to survive against time, family demands, duplicitous men, and her own weaknesses.

Twilight Story, The [Bokuto kidan] (1960, W; from Kafu Nagai). Set in 1936. Teacher Junpei (Hiroshi Akutagawa), whose wife has taken up religion and dropped sex, begins a love affair with a prostitute (Fujiko Yamamoto).

Twilight Years [Kokotsu no hito] (1973; S: Zenzo Matsuyama, from Sawako Ariyoshi). When Shigezo (Hisaya Morishige) falls into senile dementia, his working daughter-in-law Akiko (Hideko Takamine) finds herself responsible for taking care of him.

Wild Geese, The, aka *The Mistress [Gan]* (1953; S: Masashige Narusawa, from Mori Ogai). Set in the 1880s. Otama (Hideko Takamine) is tricked into becoming the mistress of Suezo, a married usurer (Eijiro Tono). Her attraction to Okada (Hiroshi Akutagawa), a student about to leave for Europe, spurs her to assert her independence.

Young People, aka *The Young [Wakai hito]* (1937; S: Naoyuki Hatta, from Yojiro Ishizaka). An offbeat triangle between a troubled girl student, a somewhat naïve male teacher, and a more realistic female teacher (Shizue Natsukawa).



Notes

I am indebted to Kyoko Hirano, director of the Film Center of the Japan Society (New York), for help in preparing this article.

1. Toyoda, who died in 1977, directed 60 full-length films (four of them silent) plus one part of an omnibus film. Only two, *The Wild Geese (The Mistress)* and *Snow Country,* are available on video in the United States. I have seen only 17 of the films, so generalizations should be understood with that qualification.
2. Donald Richie, "A Talk with Shiro Toyoda," *Film Journal* 11 (October 1958), p. 13.
3. Toyoda formed part of the *junbungaku* (pure literature) movement that Gosho launched in the 1930s to improve the quality of films by adapting serious stories and novels.
4. These included: one part of an omnibus film, *Four Love Stories*; an international coproduction, *Legend of the White Serpent*; a broad comedy, *Hotelman's Holiday*, that launched a 24-film series of which Toyoda directed two more; a sequel to one of his most successful serious films, *Marital Relations;* and *Illusion of Blood*, a version of a Grand Guignolesque Kabuki play that had been filmed several times before.
5. Richie, op. cit., p. 12.
6. Noël Burch, *To the Distant Observer: Form and Meaning in the Japanese Cinema* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, rev. ed., 1979).
7. Ibid., p. 115.
8. Gregory Barrett, *Archetypes in Japanese Film: The Sociopolitical and Religious Significance of the Principal Heroes and Heroines* (London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1989).
9. *Currents in Japanese Cinema: Essays by Tadao Sato,* trans. Gregory Barrett (New York: Kodansha, 1982), p. 73.
10. Here, as in the preceding discussions of *giri*, the Confucian family, and the shifting perspective from film to film, I am not suggesting that similar features cannot be found in other Japanese film-makers. What I do suggest is that in Toyoda these features are more pervasive and less dependent on circumstances outside the characters' control (such as the ruined postwar economy in Kinoshita's *A Japanese Tragedy* and terminal cancer in Kurosawa's *Ikiru*).
11. *Hell Screen*, trans. Takashi Kojima, in *Hell Screen, Cogwheels, A Fool's Life,* by Ryunosuke Akutagawa (Hygiene, CO: Eridanos Press, 1987).
12. In English as *A Cat, a Man and Two Women*, by Junichiro Tanizaki, trans. Paul McCarthy (New York: Kodansha International, 1990).
13. *A Dark Night's Passing,* by Naoya Shiga, trans. Edwin McClellan (New York: Kodansha International, 1976).
14. Both citations appear (in slightly different form) in "A Talk with Shiro Toyoda" and Joseph L. Anderson and Donald Richie, *The Japanese Film: Art and Industry* (Rutland, VT, and Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle, rev. ed., 1982), pp. 371–72.

SERIOUS ABOUT CINEMA?

Free sampler catalog from Facets' astonishing collection of over 27,000 foreign, classic American, silent, documentary, experimental, music, fine arts, children's videos and laser discs. Purchase for as low as $7.99 or rent-by-mail.

1517 W. Fullerton #5103
Chicago, IL 60614
e-mail: sales@facets.org

FACETS VIDEO
1-800-331-6197
Extension 5103

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION, 9/15/96

Title: *Film Quarterly.* Frequency: Quarterly. Four issues published annually. Subscription price: $24.00 individuals, $53.00 institutions. Location of office of publication: 2120 Berkeley Way, Berkeley, Alameda County, CA 94720. Headquarters of publishers: Same. Publisher: University of California Press, 2120 Berkeley Way, Berkeley, CA 94720. Editor: Ann Martin, University of California Press, Berkeley, CA 94720. Owner: The Regents of the University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720. The purpose, function and non-profit status of this organization and the exempt status for federal income tax purposes have not changed during preceding 12 months.

Extent and nature of circulation:	Av. no. copies each issue preceding 12 months	Actual no. copies of single issue pub. nearest to filing date
A. Total no. copies printed	7250	7000
B. Paid circulation:		
1. Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors and counter sales	2507	3150
2. Mail subscriptions	3036	3182
C. Total paid circulation	5544	6332
D. Free distribution	115	113
E. Total distribution	5659	6445
F. Copies not distributed		
1. Office use, left over, unaccounted, spoiled after printing	825	550
2. Return from news agents	767	5
G. Total	7250	7000
Percent paid and/or requested circulation	98%	98.2%

I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including multiple damages and civil penalties). Rebecca Simon, Journals Director, UC Press. 10/1/96

Tick (Hugo Weaving) in drag queen mode as Mitzi

The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert

Writer/director: Stephan Elliott. Producers: Al Clark, Michael Hamlyn. Cinematographer: Brian J. Breheny. Music: Guy Gross. Gramercy Pictures.

The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert features the outback trek of two flamboyant drag queens, Tick and Adam (Hugo Weaving and Guy Pearce), and an aging transsexual, Bernadette (Terence Stamp). It represents a bold departure for a mainstream Australian film, particularly for a cinema that has made its reputation with macho swashbuckling heroes such as Breaker Morant, Mad Max, and Crocodile Dundee. Inspired by the gay male subculture in Sydney, *Priscilla* can be viewed within a group of films from the late 80s and 90s (frequently referred to as the New Australian Film Renaissance) which have broken new ground in exploring formerly taboo subjects: female sexuality in female-centered narratives (*Sweetie*, *The Piano*, *Muriel's Wedding*); homosexuality (*The Everlasting Secret Family* and *The Sum of Us*); and politically sensitive areas (white neo-Nazi Australians in *Romper Stomper*).

Set against a stunning backdrop of rainbow-colored sunsets and sweeping vistas—giving the Australian outback the allure that *Crocodile Dundee* gave the bush—*Priscilla* derives its name from the lavender-colored bus that transports the three to remote desert hotels to perform their drag-show cabaret. For Adam, the trip is a lark; for Tick, a means to rendezvous with his estranged wife and young son; for Bernadette, a chance to ease the pain of her husband's death. Their bitchy infighting and hilarious interactions with the locals are delicately balanced with dazzling show-stopping performances.

Significantly, *Priscilla*'s raucous characters—in addition to the film's crude and raunchy humor that primarily focuses, in graphic detail, on male and female bodies and genitalia—though typical of gay drag humor, provide a direct link to the "ocker" comedies from the early 1970s. The ocker was a highly popular

Cruising the outback

Hugo Weaving as Mitzi (right) and as Tick (inset right); Guy Pearce as Felicia (left) and as Adam (inset left);

and successful genre within Australia that kicked off the film renaissance and included films such as *Stork* (1971), *The Adventures of Barry McKenzie* (1972), and *Alvin Purple* (1973). These films feature vulgar and uncouth males (ockers) with a resolutely hedonistic outlook, and an obsession with bodily pleasures—sex, drinking, and women.[1]

The ockers were true Australian originals, part of a strong and spirited outburst of native cultural expression in defiance of "cultural cringe"; that is, the Australian sense of inferiority vis-à-vis "superior" dominant British and American cultures that had overshadowed Australia throughout much of its history. The ockers were also the first group of films from the Australian Film Development Corporation (A.F.D.C.), the initial government film funding agency (1971–1975) that proved to be quite successful in getting the fledgling industry on its feet with a deliberately commercial product.

The Adventures of Barry McKenzie, for example, features a colonial on holiday abroad, demonstrating his Australian uniqueness in comparison to the Brit-

ish. Barry's difference is played out in a variety of comical and crass scenes that enhance his Australian virility. For example, to impress a British woman whom he is wooing, Barry dumps curry down his drawers, because he has heard that "British women like it hot." Or to show his ingenuity during a studio fire, Barry and his mates chug a case of Foster Lager, urinating on the flames in order to put them out. Throughout the film, Barry's male potency is underscored by a stream of phallic references, such as "Percy the Python" or "My one-eyed trouser snake"—the latter is even put to song!

The ocker's crude bathroom and phallic-centered humor soon led to accusations that these films were "culturally debased" and too gauche for export. For a large Australian contingent—including industry activists, film-makers, critics, and even members of Parliament (many of whom had pushed for a government-subsidized industry)—the ockers were an embarrassment. This was a particularly sensitive issue for a country interested in making a bid for international recognition with a revived national cinema.

Subsequently, the new funding policy of the A.F.D.C. (soon to become the Australian Film Commission) shifted away from commercial concerns to a more serious-intentioned quality cinema of which the country could be proud. And the films that received its financial support, such as *Picnic at Hanging Rock* (1975), *The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith* (1978), *My Brilliant Career* (1979), and *Breaker Morant* (1980), subsequently brought world attention to Australia as well as to the directors who helped to shape the 70s Renaissance: Peter Weir, Fred Schepisi, Gillian Armstrong, and Bruce Beresford. (Ironically, Bruce Beresford was the director of *The Adventures of Barry McKenzie*, as well as its sequel, *Barry McKenzie Holds His Own*.)

Twenty years later, *Priscilla* conjures up the ocker via its familiar drunk and rowdy scenes in bars on the road, as well as scenes done in deliberate bad taste: Adam, who is far more outlandish and crass than Barry, proudly shows off an "Abba turd" in a bottle to a startled Bernadette. This almost seems intended to one-up the scene where Barry McKenzie graphically vomits "chunder" on the hair of his unsuspecting psychiatrist. Tick also carries on the tradition of the ocker's phallic-centered humor through his tale of a friend "cracking the fat"—enlarging his penis.

Yet *Priscilla*'s world of gay dragsters and transsexuals is far from the blatantly heterosexual world of Barry McKenzie, Stork, and Alvin Purple. *Priscilla*'s milieu and characters would not have been possible as a mainstream film subject in the 70s, when Australian culture was more narrowly defined by a dependable and commercial genre that initially repressed a diverse culture and history in terms of gender, class, and race. *Priscilla* represents the evolution of the film industry in the last two decades, free of censorship and shaped by film-makers able to take advantage of more flexible financing structures and willing to take risks on otherwise marginalized aspects of Australian culture.

Unlike the maligned ocker, *Priscilla* has not been an embarrassment for the industry and country. The darling of the 1994 Cannes Film Festival, it quickly achieved worldwide popularity as the first of a wave of gay drag films, earning the coveted status of a crossover film that appealed to both gay and straight audiences with its cheeky camp style and audacious yet endearing characters. Duly praised for its sympathetic treatment of gay men, *Priscilla* was also voted the most popular film at the Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Film Festival. This international validation boosted the film's reception at home in Australia, for *Priscilla* grossed $15 million (an outstanding response from a country with a population of 18 million).

However, *Priscilla*'s fame and high international profile have been at the expense of its three female characters, for the film lashes out at Ol' Shirl, the bar patron (June Marie Bennett), Cynthia the stripper (Julia Cortez), and Marion, Tick's estranged wife (Sarah Chadwick). This misogyny exceeds the frequent and irritating sexism exuded by the original ockers, which essentially reduced women to sex objects and/or nymphomaniacs.

Clearly ingrained in the ocker genre is a fear of female sexuality and women's power that can be directly linked to the larger social upheavals of the early 70s, when the women's movement gathered momentum and when feminists boldly challenged the traditional ideology and culture of sexism in Australia. Within a decade, women achieved equal status by law. Thus, the chauvinism of the ockers operated in the dual sense of the word—hyper-inflated masculinity as well as spirited and patriotic nationalism. The posturing and flaunting of Australian machismo served as a smoke screen for male fears over the loss of authority, power, and sexual prowess.

Priscilla is very telling about ongoing male anxieties over the increasing empowerment of women. What starts as a wild and rollicking ocker romp across the outback soon turns into a full-blown misogynistic and racist attack on the films's females that surpasses even the frequent misogyny of gay drag itself. (This

point of view was not lost on the organizers of the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras, who refused to give the film or writer/director Stephan Elliott their support.) The film denigrates Ol' Shirl and Marion, who are lesbians, as well as Cynthia, an oversexed Filipino, all of whom present specific threats to white male patriarchal society. Coupled with this misogyny is a racism specifically directed at Asian women that reveals current white male alarm over shifting ethnicities of Australia, attitudes fueled since the 1970s, when the postwar white-only Australian immigration policy changed, opening up the country to non-Europeans, specifically Australia's Pacific Rim neighbors, and thus dramatically altering the ethnic mix.

Bernadette's scorching remarks to Ol' Shirl in the first town where she, Tick, and Adam perform makes the film's position toward lesbians quite clear. Ol' Shirl has an unbecoming slovenly and masculine appearance. With her unkempt short hair and her garb of undershirt and trousers, she is coded as butch or lesbian, which in Australian culture is linked to the unnatural, even the perverse. Further, Ol' Shirl's rough demeanor, as well as her broken English, suggests a low-class white trash, conjuring up a "bulldagger," which carries with it a grotesque and very real threat to masculinity. As if to "unsex" Ol' Shirl, Bernadette quickly bombards her with an openly hostile and vicious outburst which also implies a violent rape: "Why don't you just light your tampon and blow your box apart, because it's the only bang you're going to get!" Shocked and humiliated, Ol' Shirl hangs her head in shame as the men in the bar break into guffaws of laughter.

If Ol' Shirl is attacked as an awesome and offensive sexual deviant, Cynthia's raunchy and outlandish burlesque act codes her as obscenely sexual. Cynthia's main claim to fame is a trick with ping-pong balls: she seductively inserts them into her vagina and then pitches them at the bar's frenzied male audience. Poured into a provocative and tight-fitting black satin bustier and thong with electric black-and-white spiraled stockings, Cynthia conjures up the "damned whore," a historical male-defined Australian stereotype for women coined during the early days of the country's settlement in the late 18th century, when all female convicts were categorized as objects of sexual gratification whether or not they became prostitutes. By deeming all women damned whores, men could relegate then to an inferior status, yet maintain the power dynamic, still reaping the benefits of using them for sexual gratification. This attitude clearly sums up the perspective of the ocker toward women. Like her ancestors, Cynthia must be controlled and punished for her aberrant sexuality. Indeed, she is roughly dragged off the stage by her husband Bob (Bill Hunter), and painfully held against her will.

Significantly, Cynthia's excessive sexuality and lewd behavior are linked to her Asian heritage. Thus she is a female incarnation of what is perceived as a very real threat to the purity of white Australian society. The growing number of Asian immigrants has been perceived by white Australians not only as competition for decreasing jobs, but also as a drain on the social system in the areas of welfare and unemployment benefits. In fact, within the past few years, anti-Asian sentiment has fueled tensions in urban areas, and spawned openly racist groups such as the neo-Nazi National Movement.

Adam's parody of a geisha girl (one of his drag outfits on the road) seeks to diminish the Asian "menace." His silly, cartoonlike costume, adorned with pastel-blue rubber hair, matching pink-and-blue fur, and satin bodice and G-string, blurs all diverse nationalities into one Asian-Pacific stereotype, just as the film reduces all Asians into a grotesque female type. Adam's outlandish appearance is non-threatening because his Asian-ness and feminine appearance are a masquerade, whereas Cynthia's is uncomfortably real. This *new* Australian is disruptive, inappropriate, and clearly out of place.

Accordingly, Bernadette and Adam banish "Cynthia" from the film altogether. The life-size inflatable plastic sex doll which they use to signal for help after their bus breaks down clearly alludes to her: "Cynthia" disappears into the sky over the outback, and after the film's conclusion and final credits, she lands in an unnamed Asian country, suggesting that this is where Asian women really belong—certainly *not* in Australia.

With Ol' Shirl and Cynthia ousted from the film, Bernadette takes center stage as the film's ideal woman, or "God's Police." Coined at the beginning of the 19th century, this other male-defined stereotype deemed women a civilizing role within family and society. As the young nation grew out from under convict status into social respectability, these "good and virtuous women" (usually wives and mothers, and clearly delineated from the damned whores) were expected to look after the moral interests of the nation under the paternal metaphor. Moreover, their duties frequently included the policing of other women, a job that Bernadette undertakes with great relish upon setting her sights on Ol' Shirl and Cynthia. It's as if

Bernadette has realized her calling, transforming from a brooding widow and lackluster performer to a zealot, as she recivilizes this "intemperate social environment."[2]

If God's Police functioned in the 1840s amidst the dramatically changing male-dominated society where women were defined according to the needs of the nation as the foundation of the patriarchal family unit, then Bernadette is the 1990's rendition of God's Police, with an evangelical furor fueled by racist white male anxiety over deviant women—lesbians and oversexed foreigners—who have threatened the traditional social status quo.

By the time Bernadette, Adam, and Tick reach their final destination in Alice Springs, Bernadette has taken Cynthia's place as Bob's very chaste paramour, a role consistent with the puritanical aura associated with God's Police. We wonder how Marion, Tick's (estranged) lesbian wife will fare. Will she be a damned whore like Cynthia, or designated as perverse like Ol' Shirl? To our surprise, she typifies God's Police. Not only is she a model mother, having raised her son on her own (while developing a successful career as entertainment director in a large hotel), but a saintly and tolerant wife, open-minded about Tick's gay lifestyle and vocational choices.

However, in a dramatic shift, the film quickly demonstrates that Marion is completely fickle and unworthy of the title; she is not only a bad mother, but also a deceitful wife. (It's as if Elliott conceived of Marion only to chart her "regression.") Marion's most serious misstep is her sexual orientation, which has distracted her ability to mother, a fact not lost on her son, Benj, who strongly implies that he felt in competition with his mother's lover, and unfairly shunned. Further, Marion betrays Tick, causing him to be publicly humiliated in front of this son, as if she were threatened by Tick's presence. She deliberately lies to Tick, telling him that Benj will not be present at his drag performance, then she brings him anyway—much to Tick's embarrassment. His distress is so great that he faints and ruins the show. Marion further undercuts Tick's attempts to be a good father by ostentatiously and inappropriately trying to pair him up with the hotel busboy, when an embarrassed Tick is clearly not interested in taking on any lovers. Marion's punishment for her aberrations is the loss of her job as entertainment director, replaced by none other than Bernadette. Marion is also ousted as mother, for Tick and Adam will serve as the new parents and heads of household back in Sydney, where they take Benj. With Marion, Ol' Shirl, and Cynthia out of the film, Bernadette stands as the new standard for Australian womanhood—the bastion of reactionary "family values" that privilege the male. There is no room for lesbians or Asians.

In speaking of *Priscilla*, Australian historian/sociologist Chris Berry has commented, "The misogyny of the [transsexual and] drag queens in *Priscilla* . . . [allows] filmmakers and audiences (implied to be white, heterosexual and patriarachal) to hide behind someone else. '*We* didn't say that, . . . it was the drag queens.'" Recall Adam's snide solution for the "Cynthia problem"—to "sell her off" before he and Bernadette send her off—as well as his contemptuous assessment of Marion—"She could sandbag the holes of old tankers with that tongue." Thus Bernadette and Adam are used as vehicles, suggesting a homophobic (and transsexual-phobic) strain in the film.

Priscilla dresses up the once embarrassing and gauche ocker genre for international consumption, using the alluring and exotic flamboyance and spectacle of drag and transsexuality to vent hostilities toward women who challenge traditional male ideals of womanhood and singling out Asian women in particular as scapegoats for all those Pacific Rim immigrants who "taint" white Australian society. Just as the ocker revealed male anxieties over women's empowerment in the early 70s, even as it celebrated (and countered with) aggressive male prowess as part of a wave of spirited Australian nationalism, *Priscilla* unveils current white male fears in Australia—fear of female sexual freedom, aberrant Asian women, single mothers, women in the business sector—as women continue to make critical strides in Australian society, and as the country becomes more ethnically heterogeneous.

■ Susan Barber teaches at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles and is writing a book on Australian cinema.

Notes

My thanks to Sue Scheibler and Joseph Lee who made helpful comments in earlier versions of this review.

1. Though frequently grouped with the ockers, Alvin himself is not an ocker at all, but a shy, repressed boy-man who does not resemble the more rambunctious Barry McKenzie or Stork.
2. Anne Summers, *Damned Whores and God's Police* (Sydney: Penguin Books, rev. ed., 1994), p. 347.

Book Reviews

American Monroe

The Making of a Body Politic

By S. Paige Baty. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1995. $40.00 cloth; $15.00 paper.

This book's title—*American Monroe: The Making of a Body Politic*—and cover still—of Marilyn Monroe from the 1953 film *Niagara*—might lead one to expect that the work will in some way, fashion, or form relate to the films that made Monroe into a cultural icon. Such an assumption, however, is wrong. If S. Paige Baty has any interest in Monroe's films, she keeps it a secret in this book, which only mentions film titles in passing and doesn't discuss films at all. Indeed, one might wonder if the book is even appropriate for review in a film journal. The answer is yes. This frequently fascinating, well-researched, and well-written book poses significant questions for film studies, and film studies, in turn, poses interesting questions for this book.

I want to begin with what Baty does do and what, in fact, she does very well. She characterizes Monroe as a "representative character," by which she means "a cultural figure through whom the character of political life is articulated." For Baty's purposes, Monroe is such a figure for "our time." In the late 20th century, furthermore, the mass media play a quick and overwhelming role in the construction of such figures, and Baty attempts to interpret and track some of the ways in which they have remembered Monroe. Drawing upon Foucault and others, Baty sees Monroe as a site of various cultural battles and contestations for gender and political meanings, a body upon which current discourses of knowledge and power have written and continue to write themselves out.

Baty situates Monroe in what she terms "media res," a place created by the mass media in which the dead can always live and in which their story is never finished—certainly not, at any rate, when their life is. In such a "virtual community," dead figures such as Elvis and J.F.K. hold an extremely prominent place, and the citizens of such a community, including ourselves, have memories of lives they have only lived vicariously through the media. In some sense, we remember Monroe much as we might remember our youth. What then are these memories?

Baty is particularly interested in what she calls "gendered" memories, and she makes the insightful observation that the lives of representative women are linked to the "great men" with whom they are associated. Monroe is, of course, strongly associated with such important and famous men as Joe DiMaggio, Arthur Miller, and the Kennedys, and, according to Baty, her ability to manipulate men to achieve her goals is part of the gendered way in which she is remembered. Monroe has been remembered as Marilyn, the star, and as Norma Jean, the child; and this split encourages the search for the real woman underlying the star persona.

Since Baty's primary interest is in gendered rememberings of Monroe, she gives major attention to Norman Mailer's *Marilyn* and Gloria Steinem's *Marilyn/Norma Jean*. Mailer does not claim to write a truthful biography of a real person but, rather, to construct someone out of myth, simulation, and his personal desire/fantasy. He reveals not one unified Marilyn but many contradictory Marilyns. Steinem, on the other hand, searches for the real Marilyn—the girl Norma Jean who became the myth—and, within a feminist politics, she turns Marilyn into a figure representing her generation. Within this context, Norma Jean's childhood abuse stands for the larger social problem of child abuse within our culture. For Steinem, Monroe is tragically unable to become a whole person, unable to unify her childhood and adult life. Her many abortions become a sign of her desire to remain a child, rather than to have one. Mailer's characterization of the fatherless child/childless woman, on the other hand, enables him to become the father of the Marilyn he authors.

Monroe has also, since her death, become caught up in a number of rememberings which involve conspiracies—conspiracies that include her own death (who may have had her killed and why) and in which such figures as the Kennedy brothers, mobsters, the F.B.I. and C.I.A., and Fidel Castro all play a part. Baty provocatively explores the appeal of conspiracies in our postmodern, late-20th-century society where, she argues, the absence of such plots threaten meaning, history, and memory with total chaos. Within these conspiracies, Marilyn straddles a line between the legitimate and the illegitimate, her body dangerously corrupting the legitimate powers she comes in contact with. Her body becomes transgressive, representing gendered notions of woman as chaotic and blasphemous.

Baty also insightfully probes the need our culture has for dead bodies—rather than living people—as representative characters. Death, she argues, has been hid-

den away in our culture to the point of near invisibility, while at the same time it is graphic and omnipresent in the media. Marilyn's body gets caught within this "pornography of death" climate, where a fascination with her corpse and its appearance surfaces both in photographs and in Thomas Noguchi's published coroner's account of her autopsy. Baty traces the opposition of the beautiful, firm body (even in death, in its pre-embalmed, predissected state) and the collapsed face after the autopsy. She also discusses the discourse of medical statistics that emerges from the coroner's report, a discourse that attempts to contain and control the body of the sex symbol.

Baty is able to accomplish all her goals without reference to Monroe's films in part because she is interested in how Marilyn has been remembered in the media since her death. I noted that Baty is only interested in "some" rememberings and, while such a narrowing of the topic is essential, I wonder about the total exclusion of one of those media rememberings—the constant presence of Monroe's films on television and video. At the very least, seeing the roles she played when she was alive remains part of the media's remembrances of her, and some attention to these roles and how they fit in the mix of the other media discourses would only strengthen Baty's project. Attention to the films would also enable Baty to pose another provocative question: What is the connection between Monroe's star persona and the fascination she held for powerful men? Even if Baty wanted to deny a connection, the book would have been stronger if she had done so explicitly and explained why.

Ironically, Baty engages in the book's only textual analysis in a paragraph devoted to Madonna's music videos. Discussing people of color in these videos, she notes that "their racialized bodies are situated in visually and contextually liminal positions." She also describes Madonna's body, face, and hair with a specificity lacking in the discussions of Marilyn, concluding that the pop singer ultimately affirms and centers the blonde while marginalizing people of color. Here Baty almost unwittingly shows the value of the kind of textual analysis that she rigorously avoids in relation to Marilyn. Is there nothing of importance related to this project we can learn about Marilyn by analyzing the specifics of her image and the manner in which she is cast and framed in her films?

Even as it is, however, the book supplies a potentially fascinating resource for film scholars interested in reception theory. Baty shows that whatever the unexamined, original reception contexts for the films might have been, the many ways in which Marilyn has been remembered create many new contexts for the continual circulation of her films through our culture. Has Steinem's 1986 book, for example, helped create a feminist rereading of Monroe's films? Has Marilyn's association with the Kennedys had an effect on how we watch those films today?

The book also implicitly shows how the tendency in cultural studies to focus on figures Baty calls representative is creating a new canon of sorts. If in the 60s and 70s, for example, auteur assumptions valorized the works of directors with a unique vision and personal style, cultural studies frequently valorizes figures who are in some sense representative of something larger. I would, however, argue that we should not lose track of "unrepresentative figures," for there are many important film-makers, actors, pop musicians, etc., who represent little in the culture or even in their profession, but are still valid subjects for cultural study.

Finally, Baty's book relates to the major critical shift from textual studies to contextual studies that occurred in the field of academic film theory and criticism between the 70s and 80s. This work now suggests the possibility of a shift of equal dimensions in cultural studies from contextual to nontextual studies, for Baty's Marilyn lives in a space totally divorced from that of the films in which she appeared. If Baty reminds us that Marilyn lives in "media res," I would remind Baty that she also first lived in and continues to live in specific films. This is a book that, curiously, has not gone from the films to something larger in the culture but has, rather, forgotten the films. One does not need to be a film scholar to be concerned about such a strategy. Even from the perspective of general cultural studies, we may wonder about the implications of entirely cutting film stars off from the films that originally made them stars/icons. Are Marilyn's films and Marilyn in media res really that totally separate?

PETER LEHMAN

■ Peter Lehman teaches in the Department of Media Arts at the University of Arizona.

Between Stage and Screen

Ingmar Bergman Directs

By Emil Törnqvist. Kinderhook, N.Y.: International Book Distributor/ Amsterdam University Press, 1995. $45.00 cloth; $24.50 paper.

Emil Törnqvist's finely documented and strenuously argued study of Ingmar Bergman, *Between*

den away in our culture to the point of near invisibility, while at the same time it is graphic and omnipresent in the media. Marilyn's body gets caught within this "pornography of death" climate, where a fascination with her corpse and its appearance surfaces both in photographs and in Thomas Noguchi's published coroner's account of her autopsy. Baty traces the opposition of the beautiful, firm body (even in death, in its pre-embalmed, predissected state) and the collapsed face after the autopsy. She also discusses the discourse of medical statistics that emerges from the coroner's report, a discourse that attempts to contain and control the body of the sex symbol.

Baty is able to accomplish all her goals without reference to Monroe's films in part because she is interested in how Marilyn has been remembered in the media since her death. I noted that Baty is only interested in "some" rememberings and, while such a narrowing of the topic is essential, I wonder about the total exclusion of one of those media rememberings—the constant presence of Monroe's films on television and video. At the very least, seeing the roles she played when she was alive remains part of the media's remembrances of her, and some attention to these roles and how they fit in the mix of the other media discourses would only strengthen Baty's project. Attention to the films would also enable Baty to pose another provocative question: What is the connection between Monroe's star persona and the fascination she held for powerful men? Even if Baty wanted to deny a connection, the book would have been stronger if she had done so explicitly and explained why.

Ironically, Baty engages in the book's only textual analysis in a paragraph devoted to Madonna's music videos. Discussing people of color in these videos, she notes that "their racialized bodies are situated in visually and contextually liminal positions." She also describes Madonna's body, face, and hair with a specificity lacking in the discussions of Marilyn, concluding that the pop singer ultimately affirms and centers the blonde while marginalizing people of color. Here Baty almost unwittingly shows the value of the kind of textual analysis that she rigorously avoids in relation to Marilyn. Is there nothing of importance related to this project we can learn about Marilyn by analyzing the specifics of her image and the manner in which she is cast and framed in her films?

Even as it is, however, the book supplies a potentially fascinating resource for film scholars interested in reception theory. Baty shows that whatever the unexamined, original reception contexts for the films might have been, the many ways in which Marilyn has been remembered create many new contexts for the continual circulation of her films through our culture. Has Steinem's 1986 book, for example, helped create a feminist rereading of Monroe's films? Has Marilyn's association with the Kennedys had an effect on how we watch those films today?

The book also implicitly shows how the tendency in cultural studies to focus on figures Baty calls representative is creating a new canon of sorts. If in the 60s and 70s, for example, auteur assumptions valorized the works of directors with a unique vision and personal style, cultural studies frequently valorizes figures who are in some sense representative of something larger. I would, however, argue that we should not lose track of "unrepresentative figures," for there are many important film-makers, actors, pop musicians, etc., who represent little in the culture or even in their profession, but are still valid subjects for cultural study.

Finally, Baty's book relates to the major critical shift from textual studies to contextual studies that occurred in the field of academic film theory and criticism between the 70s and 80s. This work now suggests the possibility of a shift of equal dimensions in cultural studies from contextual to nontextual studies, for Baty's Marilyn lives in a space totally divorced from that of the films in which she appeared. If Baty reminds us that Marilyn lives in "media res," I would remind Baty that she also first lived in and continues to live in specific films. This is a book that, curiously, has not gone from the films to something larger in the culture but has, rather, forgotten the films. One does not need to be a film scholar to be concerned about such a strategy. Even from the perspective of general cultural studies, we may wonder about the implications of entirely cutting film stars off from the films that originally made them stars/icons. Are Marilyn's films and Marilyn in media res really that totally separate?

PETER LEHMAN

■ Peter Lehman teaches in the Department of Media Arts at the University of Arizona.

Between Stage and Screen

Ingmar Bergman Directs

By Emil Törnqvist. Kinderhook, N.Y.: International Book Distributor/ Amsterdam University Press, 1995. $45.00 cloth; $24.50 paper.

Emil Törnqvist's finely documented and strenuously argued study of Ingmar Bergman, *Between*

Stage and Screen, rests on two broad premises—one unassailable, the other tendentious (and, to my mind, somewhat worrisome). First, the unassailable: Törnqvist begins by stressing that if we are ever to fully understand how "Ingmar Bergman directs," we must avoid a cinema-centric view. Although many know Bergman only or primarily as a film-maker (indeed, arguably as the archetypal and originating modern film-maker), Törnqvist stresses Bergman's remarkable productivity in a variety of media—including 50 films, over 100 stage performances, 40 radio plays, 15 television productions, and assorted operas and ballets—and quotes Bergman's own words to confirm the critical opinion that "no other director after the breakthrough of the sound film has been so influenced by the theater" (14). "My films," Bergman says, "are only a distillation of what I do in the theater" (12)—undoubtedly an overstatement, but a penetrating and useful one, and the foundation of Törnqvist's six chapters on stage productions by Bergman and seven chapters on individual films (and one teleplay). (He also includes two very brief chapters on radio plays, but these perfunctory discussions do little more than assert that the major influences on Bergman's art persist in his radio work as well.)

Törnqvist assays several dimensions of Bergman's cinematic theatricality. Most concretely, he argues that Bergman's artistry in all fields radiates outward from repeated confrontations with Strindberg, first and foremost, but also Ibsen, O'Neill, and Shakespeare. Interestingly, Törnqvist tells a tale not only of discipleship, but of provocation. Bergman obviously shares a great deal with these dramatists, both formally and thematically, including a keen sense of the humiliating edge of human relations, especially between the sexes; a penchant for unmasking those who fail to respect the illusoriness of truth; and an abiding interest in the substance and structure of dreams, especially useful for those who need to be reminded of the saving truthfulness of some illusions. Törnqvist's detailed analyses of Bergman's productions of plays by these writers effectively highlight his substantive modifications and "transubstantiations," a wonderfully apt term that conveys the miraculous power generated when one strong artist crashes into another.

The greatest transformation and adaptation of these dramatists, though, occurs not in Bergman's stage productions but in his films. Törnqvist offers no comprehensive critical interpretation of the films that he discusses, and sometimes the chapters are jarringly elliptical, rambling, and abbreviated. But even as they omit much else, the discussions offer interesting and knowledgeable analyses of how Bergman's films characteristically feature theatricality as a prominent theme, assimilate stage conventions to cinematic techniques, repeatedly echo particular plays by Strindberg, and in general elaborate compelling versions of Strindberg's innovative forms—the dream play and the chamber play. We cannot say that we know thoroughly Bergman's film language, neither his grammar nor his vocabulary, unless we recognize, however transfigured, *The Stronger* and *A Dream Play* in *Persona*, *Storm* in *Wild Strawberries*, and *Ghost Sonata* in *Cries and Whispers*.

But, as stated earlier, alongside this emphasis on Bergman and the theater is Törnqvist's second, more questionable premise. He announces late in the book what has in fact guided him from the beginning: a belief that Bergman's "extensive work as a stage director has saved him from the deadly realism characterizing the products of many 'pure' filmmakers" (201). Although he goes on to say that Bergman successfully balances what some see as the realistic impulse inherent in the film form and the impulse toward stylization and individual characterization in the theater, Törnqvist relentlessly pushes him in one direction, defining Bergman's cinematic universe as that of the theatricalized imagination, the dreamlike state of "halfreality" (210), and the inner world shorn of temporal signifiers (206).

This imbalance has several unfortunate consequences. First, it leads to what I feel is a serious misunderstanding of Bergman's symbolic technique and generates some extremely heavy-handed and one-dimensional interpretations. Bergman sometimes invites the latter: he, after all, gives us images of a knight playing chess with Death (*The Seventh Seal*), clocks and watches without hands (*Wild Strawberries*), and descriptions of the soul as moist and red (*Cries and Whispers*). Still, in part because he removes symbols from a realm of concrete existence and emphasizes primarily metaphysical, philosophical, psychological, and archetypal referentiality, Törnqvist more than occasionally ends up with needlessly reductive and simplistic readings of, for example, door symbolism and the "exit from life" in *Fanny and Alexander* (176), and matches and lamps as "the flame of life" in *Storm* (134). Törnqvist alerts us to the "metaphoric network of considerable complexity and power" (20) in Bergman's films, but his interpretive method does not always do it justice.

Our sense of Bergman's artistry suffers when not only the symbols but also the characters are stripped of their embeddedness, when their world is seen as a "half" instead of a full reality that is external, empirical, contingent, historical, and communal, as well as dreamy, mysterious, atemporal, and subjective. It is important to distinguish carefully between a flight from dull or deadly realism and a flight from reality, and I believe that Törnqvist sometimes confuses the two in a way that Bergman does not; in his films Bergman attempts (and accomplishes) the first but not the second.

Perhaps our sense of the concrete embeddedness of

Bergman's symbols and characters would be enhanced if we considered in more detail cinematic as well as dramatic influences and analogues: an examination of the legacy of Sjöström, Dreyer, Rossellini, Hitchcock, and Kurosawa, for example, would be a valuable complement to Törnqvist's expert analysis of Bergman's deep, but by no means overriding or exclusive, reliance on Strindberg and the theater. That is asking a lot—perhaps too much—of one specialized critical study, but such a comprehensive approach is necessary if we are to understand fully not only Bergman's position between the stage and screen, but also his relationship to the world, or more precisely, the many worlds, both found and created, inner and outer, of his remarkably rich and varied artistic journey.

SIDNEY GOTTLIEB

■ Sidney Gottlieb is the editor of *Hitchcock on Hitchock: Selected Writings and Interviews.*

Claiming the Real

The Documentary Film Revisited

By Brian Winston. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1995. $55.00 cloth; $19.95 paper.

Brian Winston's new book is an important intervention in documentary film scholarship, and a welcome jolt to what has sometimes been called the "discourse of sobriety." The book arrives at a time of renewed attention to documentary in cinema studies, but also at a time of what Winston calls "radical difficulties . . . perhaps fatal" (6–7) to documentary: the arrival of the digital image challenging the realist photographic documentary's foundational claim to "represent reality." As others have suggested, however, this so-called crisis of representation is only felt as such by those theorists with an investment in a particular kind of image, the image that makes an evidential claim to the real. Representations themselves merrily proliferate, and function within the public sphere. *Claiming the Real* can be seen as a cartography of that investment. As Winston says, "This book addresses itself to a single question: whence came and what were, are, and can be the legitimations for the realist documentary project?" (7). The future of documentary film studies, meanwhile, lies in examining issues of reception, social and cultural effects and ethics, and discursive structure.

Fortunately, despite Winston's claim (and in keeping with his expansive agenda for documentary studies), the book is anything but single-minded. He examines realist (and other) documentaries from many perspectives, with fine attention to detail and historical and cultural context, and with a love of the tangential side trip that makes for a remarkably rich investigation. Winston delivers a metahistory of documentary film practice (from Lumière to the present), and of its traditions of scholarship and theorization, offering penetrating (and sometimes withering) analyses of foundational texts, and then ably summarizing (and challenging) the current state of scholarship. His approach is versatile. Not only does his bibliography have an enormous range—from film, media, and television studies through legal theory, art history, photography, journalism, social and political theory, anthropology, ethics, and the history of science—but his experience as a documentary producer and maker gives him a valuable on-the-ground perspective.

Winston cuts through some of the abstractions of theory and keeps his analysis in touch with key pragmatic issues of documentary. First, he never loses sight of the institutional constraints on documentary production, distribution, and exhibition (often obscured by the auteurist focus of much cinema studies writing). He soundly demonstrates the central role that sponsorship played in curtailing the (sometimes) radical intentions of the pre-WWII canon of English and American documentary, a role that it continues to play in shaping contemporary television documentary.

Second, Winston's intimate awareness of the technical history of documentary camera and sound recording enables him both to attest to the importance of technological innovation in affecting documentary style, and to contest the mythologies (especially of American direct-cinema proponents) that technology could solve fundamental conceptual problems in documentary realism. Third, Winston has a much broader sense than many academics of the sheer volume of documentary production, both exceptional and banal. Thus he avoids mistaking the breakthroughs of documentary's celebrated innovators (e.g., Jean Rouch, David and Judith MacDougall, Errol Morris) for dominant practice; most ethnographic, vérité, and public affairs documentary continues to labor under illusions of representational adequacy, civic utility, and aesthetic expression.

Indeed, the public, institutional, and academic discourses used by the documentary community (which includes audiences, makers, and scholars) remain becalmed in the epistemological quagmire of what Winston calls "'truth claim' legitimations" (6): the realist documentary assertion that it has a direct ontological

Bergman's symbols and characters would be enhanced if we considered in more detail cinematic as well as dramatic influences and analogues: an examination of the legacy of Sjöström, Dreyer, Rossellini, Hitchcock, and Kurosawa, for example, would be a valuable complement to Törnqvist's expert analysis of Bergman's deep, but by no means overriding or exclusive, reliance on Strindberg and the theater. That is asking a lot—perhaps too much—of one specialized critical study, but such a comprehensive approach is necessary if we are to understand fully not only Bergman's position between the stage and screen, but also his relationship to the world, or more precisely, the many worlds, both found and created, inner and outer, of his remarkably rich and varied artistic journey.

SIDNEY GOTTLIEB

■ Sidney Gottlieb is the editor of *Hitchcock on Hitchock: Selected Writings and Interviews.*

Claiming the Real

The Documentary Film Revisited

By Brian Winston. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1995. $55.00 cloth; $19.95 paper.

Brian Winston's new book is an important intervention in documentary film scholarship, and a welcome jolt to what has sometimes been called the "discourse of sobriety." The book arrives at a time of renewed attention to documentary in cinema studies, but also at a time of what Winston calls "radical difficulties . . . perhaps fatal" (6–7) to documentary: the arrival of the digital image challenging the realist photographic documentary's foundational claim to "represent reality." As others have suggested, however, this so-called crisis of representation is only felt as such by those theorists with an investment in a particular kind of image, the image that makes an evidential claim to the real. Representations themselves merrily proliferate, and function within the public sphere. *Claiming the Real* can be seen as a cartography of that investment. As Winston says, "This book addresses itself to a single question: whence came and what were, are, and can be the legitimations for the realist documentary project?" (7). The future of documentary film studies, meanwhile, lies in examining issues of reception, social and cultural effects and ethics, and discursive structure.

Fortunately, despite Winston's claim (and in keeping with his expansive agenda for documentary studies), the book is anything but single-minded. He examines realist (and other) documentaries from many perspectives, with fine attention to detail and historical and cultural context, and with a love of the tangential side trip that makes for a remarkably rich investigation. Winston delivers a metahistory of documentary film practice (from Lumière to the present), and of its traditions of scholarship and theorization, offering penetrating (and sometimes withering) analyses of foundational texts, and then ably summarizing (and challenging) the current state of scholarship. His approach is versatile. Not only does his bibliography have an enormous range—from film, media, and television studies through legal theory, art history, photography, journalism, social and political theory, anthropology, ethics, and the history of science—but his experience as a documentary producer and maker gives him a valuable on-the-ground perspective.

Winston cuts through some of the abstractions of theory and keeps his analysis in touch with key pragmatic issues of documentary. First, he never loses sight of the institutional constraints on documentary production, distribution, and exhibition (often obscured by the auteurist focus of much cinema studies writing). He soundly demonstrates the central role that sponsorship played in curtailing the (sometimes) radical intentions of the pre-WWII canon of English and American documentary, a role that it continues to play in shaping contemporary television documentary.

Second, Winston's intimate awareness of the technical history of documentary camera and sound recording enables him both to attest to the importance of technological innovation in affecting documentary style, and to contest the mythologies (especially of American direct-cinema proponents) that technology could solve fundamental conceptual problems in documentary realism. Third, Winston has a much broader sense than many academics of the sheer volume of documentary production, both exceptional and banal. Thus he avoids mistaking the breakthroughs of documentary's celebrated innovators (e.g., Jean Rouch, David and Judith MacDougall, Errol Morris) for dominant practice; most ethnographic, vérité, and public affairs documentary continues to labor under illusions of representational adequacy, civic utility, and aesthetic expression.

Indeed, the public, institutional, and academic discourses used by the documentary community (which includes audiences, makers, and scholars) remain becalmed in the epistemological quagmire of what Winston calls "'truth claim' legitimations" (6): the realist documentary assertion that it has a direct ontological

relationship to reality. This assertion coexists with our knowledge (though it is not always present to consciousness) that documentary is also always mediated by the material image, not to mention the subjectivities of makers, institutions, and, crucially, audiences. John Grierson proposed a definition of documentary that would function as a compromise between ontology and mediation: documentary is the "creative treatment of actuality." For Winston, this is simply a contradiction, and he organizes this book by riffing off the problematics raised by the three central terms of this definition. Throughout, he demonstrates the struggles, occasional achievements, and overwhelming paralysis that Grierson's legacy bequeathed to documentary discourse.

Vigorous and blunt, *Claiming the Real* is most satisfying when Winston dismantles many of the dominant myths of canonical documentary history and theory. Through a sharp lens of historical and cultural recontextualization, he skewers the pretensions to truth, art, and social amelioration made by figures like Robert Flaherty, John Grierson (and his followers), Pare Lorentz, Leni Riefenstahl, Robert Gardner, Frederick Wiseman (and others of the American direct-cinema group). He also calls attention to figures like Esfir Shub, Roger Graef, David and Judith MacDougall, and Stewart McAllister, and defends figures like Jean Rouch. Winston pays close attention to the claims individual filmmakers have made for their practice, but is forthright about his own ethical stances and preferences. For example, he excuses problems in Richard Leacock's work because he at least has a "self-evident liking for his subjects" (216), and admires Jean Rouch's "ironic self-awareness" (187), though other critics find it self-serving and recuperative. Winston is notably hostile to Frederick Wiseman, however, ignoring the possibility that Wiseman's fence-sitting on the "objective/subjective" question might be a strategic equivocation—a public persona—that contributes to Wiseman's ongoing investigations of social institutions.

Sometimes Winston's passionate style leads him to become too categorical and dismissive; for example, he says that Grierson's films "are, largely, flawed almost beyond interest" (58). Occasionally, he will debunk the theoretical premises of a film practice—but then this leads him erroneously to conclude that all of the specific films related to that movement are worthless. When Winston argues that "running from social meaning is an inevitable structural flaw in any film which creatively treats actuality in the name of public information, education, social purpose, or what you will—whoever makes it" (69), he ignores his own crucial insight that concludes the book: that audience reception is the ultimate measure of social meaning, not the ostensible inscription of reality in the film text. Winston's criticism of the mode of practice and presuppositions of the Griersonian documentary and demonstrative ethnography are convincing, but he need not dismiss (even if he could) the oeuvres as a-priori failures. The measure of "success" or "failure" may, in fact, be impossible to take.

This problem recurs in Winston's otherwise incisive chapters on documentary ethics (what he calls "The Repressed in Documentary Film Studies"). He exposes the absurdity of consent laws and the limits of "public-right-to-know" legitimations, puncturing the easy myths of good intentions that have armed much documentary practice. However, when he claims that "the number of documentaries that have had any demonstrable effect is very small" (238), his terms of demonstrability seem too literal and direct. Teaching multiplication tables in elementary school has little "demonstrable" social effect, but is probably a defensible educational activity, and part of a vast web of knowledge discourses whose impact is too complex to "measure." In another case, Winston rightly insists on never losing sight of the motivations of power, control, and exploitation that drive most documentary film-making (under the cover of legitimations of social amelioration, journalism, artistry, and public knowledge). But if those motives always obtain, how can he tenably also desire a pure, ethically safe position? That position may be impossible, whether one is behind, in front of, or without a camera. As Leonard Cohen put it, "There is no decent place to stand/In a massacre."

Claiming the Real is most valuable when Winston focuses his erudition and experience on specific issues and fallacies of documentary theory and practice. (Winston's pithy writing style and tight organization of topics into short chapters also makes the book highly useful for teaching purposes.) For example, he demonstrates the ideological recuperation and "running away from social meaning" that take place in the "problem moment" structure of the Griersonian film: the film may realistically represent a social problem, but the problem is portrayed as temporary ("momentary") and so escapes analysis. Here, as throughout the book, Winston isolates a documentary structure, suggests its conceptual roots and social and political consequences, and even points to its legacy ("problem moment" documentary becomes the obligatory "balance" required of post-WWII television reportage).

Elsewhere, Winston charts the scientistic cultural rhetoric that underpins the claims to authenticity in post-WWII vérité. He shows how scientific modes of probability have led to the paradox of the "exemplary" case in documentary: the example that bears the burden of being both typical and *especially* dramatic or illuminating.

> Implicit probabilistics allow for any particular account of an event or person, if presented as

being of social significance, to be received as evidence of whole classes of such events or persons. Probability leads to synecdoche and synecdoche thus become critical for documentary film "actuality." . . . This is why realist documentaries ever since have existed in free fall between the general and the particular (134).

In another strong example, he deftly illustrates the limitations of film as evidence in an analysis of Timothy Asch and Napoleon Chagnon's *The Ax Fight*. Winston shows how even in the most carefully reflexive of texts, meaning emerges not self-evidently from the images and sounds, but through the *framing* of images and sounds in discourse.

Claiming the Real is weakest in the central section, "Treatment: Documentary as Drama." Here Winston grapples with the knotty theoretical problem of the definition of documentary and its boundaries with fiction and narrative. His conclusion, that "narrative is never absent in documentary film" (119) is perhaps true, but relies on a definition of "narrative" so vague (variously "sequence," "organization," "dramatization," or simply "time-based") as to be without explanatory force. Moreover, the conflation of "narrative" with "fiction" (different though overlapping analytical categories) makes Winston's attempts to apply literary theory to documentary film less rigorous and convincing than his applications of scientific and social theory. I suspect a different paradigm of textual organization, namely rhetoric, might be more useful in this section. For example, narrative is recognized as a part of rhetorical form (along with exposition, proof, rebuttal); moreover, both fiction and nonfiction texts can have a rhetorical or argumentative dimension. Nonetheless, Winston's overall focus on patterns of documentary organization that overlap with feature films, literature, diaries, journeys, and dramas has numerous critical payoffs.

MICHAEL ZRYD

■ Michael Zryd teaches in the Cinema Studies Department at New York University.

Consumer Culture and TV Programming

By Robin Andersen. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1995. $69.95 cloth; $21.95 paper.

The study of advertising, like media studies in general, has historically been divided into two camps. One camp, represented by critics such as Ben H. Bagdikian, Herbert I. Schiller, and Erik Barnouw, is based in political economy. This perspective focuses on advertising as a funding system for media, and on how the commercial imperative that drives ad-supported-media's finances fundamentality defines and limits the content of such media. The other framework, represented by the likes of Judith Williamson and Andrew Wernick, examines the advertisements themselves—the advertisement-as-text approach. Such symbolic critics concentrate on how the ideology of the commercial form—like the 30-second spot—represents consumption and society. In the days when it was easier to at least theorize about the separation of advertising content from nonadvertising content, the academic division between the economists and semioticians of advertising criticism was logical.

Increasingly, however, scholars are recognizing that such a separation of the two intellectual traditions may no longer be effective in explaining modern advertising. Influenced by factors like deregulation as well as new technologies such as remote controls and pay-per media, advertising has raised the stakes of its social influence, expanding and integrating its economic muscle and symbolic manipulation. With many new advertising forms, it is difficult to tell the ad from the TV show (or movie or magazine). Infomercials, sponsored cultural events (like The "Tostitos" Fiesta Bowl or "Mobil" Masterpiece Theater), "Channel One," product placement, and movie tie-ins, among other related phenomena, illustrate that advertising has entered a new phase, and criticism of advertising must follow. Accordingly, some advertising scholars are combining the political and economic with the symbolic to comprehensively grasp advertising's new purview.

One such scholar is Robin Andersen. In her valuable book *Consumer Culture and TV Programming*, she examines how advertising influences the form and messages of television programming. She spends much time exploring the nature of television and advertising economics, but as she argues that the programs of television are increasingly taking on the look and themes of advertising, she uses the methodology and arguments of cultural studies critics to show the concordance of TV show with TV commercial.

being of social significance, to be received as evidence of whole classes of such events or persons. Probability leads to synecdoche and synecdoche thus become critical for documentary film "actuality." . . . This is why realist documentaries ever since have existed in free fall between the general and the particular (134).

In another strong example, he deftly illustrates the limitations of film as evidence in an analysis of Timothy Asch and Napoleon Chagnon's *The Ax Fight*. Winston shows how even in the most carefully reflexive of texts, meaning emerges not self-evidently from the images and sounds, but through the *framing* of images and sounds in discourse.

Claiming the Real is weakest in the central section, "Treatment: Documentary as Drama." Here Winston grapples with the knotty theoretical problem of the definition of documentary and its boundaries with fiction and narrative. His conclusion, that "narrative is never absent in documentary film" (119) is perhaps true, but relies on a definition of "narrative" so vague (variously "sequence," "organization," "dramatization," or simply "time-based") as to be without explanatory force. Moreover, the conflation of "narrative" with "fiction" (different though overlapping analytical categories) makes Winston's attempts to apply literary theory to documentary film less rigorous and convincing than his applications of scientific and social theory. I suspect a different paradigm of textual organization, namely rhetoric, might be more useful in this section. For example, narrative is recognized as a part of rhetorical form (along with exposition, proof, rebuttal); moreover, both fiction and nonfiction texts can have a rhetorical or argumentative dimension. Nonetheless, Winston's overall focus on patterns of documentary organization that overlap with feature films, literature, diaries, journeys, and dramas has numerous critical payoffs.

MICHAEL ZRYD

■ Michael Zryd teaches in the Cinema Studies Department at New York University.

Consumer Culture and TV Programming

By Robin Andersen. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1995. $69.95 cloth; $21.95 paper.

The study of advertising, like media studies in general, has historically been divided into two camps. One camp, represented by critics such as Ben H. Bagdikian, Herbert I. Schiller, and Erik Barnouw, is based in political economy. This perspective focuses on advertising as a funding system for media, and on how the commercial imperative that drives ad-supported-media's finances fundamentality defines and limits the content of such media. The other framework, represented by the likes of Judith Williamson and Andrew Wernick, examines the advertisements themselves—the advertisement-as-text approach. Such symbolic critics concentrate on how the ideology of the commercial form—like the 30-second spot—represents consumption and society. In the days when it was easier to at least theorize about the separation of advertising content from nonadvertising content, the academic division between the economists and semioticians of advertising criticism was logical.

Increasingly, however, scholars are recognizing that such a separation of the two intellectual traditions may no longer be effective in explaining modern advertising. Influenced by factors like deregulation as well as new technologies such as remote controls and pay-per media, advertising has raised the stakes of its social influence, expanding and integrating its economic muscle and symbolic manipulation. With many new advertising forms, it is difficult to tell the ad from the TV show (or movie or magazine). Infomercials, sponsored cultural events (like The "Tostitos" Fiesta Bowl or "Mobil" Masterpiece Theater), "Channel One," product placement, and movie tie-ins, among other related phenomena, illustrate that advertising has entered a new phase, and criticism of advertising must follow. Accordingly, some advertising scholars are combining the political and economic with the symbolic to comprehensively grasp advertising's new purview.

One such scholar is Robin Andersen. In her valuable book *Consumer Culture and TV Programming*, she examines how advertising influences the form and messages of television programming. She spends much time exploring the nature of television and advertising economics, but as she argues that the programs of television are increasingly taking on the look and themes of advertising, she uses the methodology and arguments of cultural studies critics to show the concordance of TV show with TV commercial.

Consumer Culture is divided into two parts. The first part contextualizes and elaborates upon why advertising's influence over TV programming is increasing, and details the author's theoretical position, a position strongly influenced by Marxist critical studies. Chapter 1 highlights changes in advertising in the 1980s, discussing such factors as the decline in network ratings—leading to cuts in personnel and increased servitude toward advertisers—and the development of mega-media conglomerates. Chapter 2, focusing on the Nike company, takes a broader economic perspective than many traditional political economists who study advertising. Andersen explores laissez-faire free-trade policies and the betrayal of U.S. labor for corporate profits through downsizing, while contrasting such behavior with the promises of advertising and media content. As she concludes at the end of this chapter, "The paradox is this: By accepting Nike's offer of empowerment and liberation when we buy a pair of Nike shoes, we endorse and promote the very production practices and corporate policies that preclude our own economic well-being" (67). The next two chapters explore the increased use by advertising of focus-group research to tap into consumer needs and anxieties, and critique postmodernist views of consumer culture—such as that of Jean Baudrillard—for artificially severing connections between the economic and the cultural.

The second half of the book draws on techniques from cultural studies to show how different television genres are morphing into commercial forms. As the author notes, this morphing is sometimes obvious, like when "Seinfeld" devotes a whole program to the celebration of Pez or Junior Mints. However, there are also more subtle convergences between advertising and television programming; much of the discussion in these later chapters looks at the "therapeutic" approach taken by media content and how this approach mirrors advertising's basic selling tactics. As Andersen argues, advertising is therapeutic in the sense that it decontextualizes social issues by focusing on how individuals may simplistically solve their problems through product consumption. She scrutinizes television programming that reproduces this strategy by psychologizing social problems and deflecting attention away from structural causes.

Thus the program "thirtysomething," critiqued in chapter 5, not only defined the main characters' social group by "lifestyle"-defining commodity icons, but also tended to present anxieties about social problems as personality flaws solved through talk (or in Michael and Hope's case, yuppie whining). Such discourse, Andersen notes, reflects the background assumptions involved in "lifestyle marketing." Later chapters focus on the thematic convergence with advertising found in talk shows, mediated politics, coverage of the Persian Gulf War, and reality-based shows like "Cops."

Andersen has produced a book that persuasively, and frighteningly, accents how truly intertwined broadcasting and advertising have become. In its conclusion, she briefly discusses possible intervention strategies, such as politicizing consumption and reregulation. But the author's attempt at an optimistic ending is only halfhearted. This is understandable. In an era of Disney/ABC, tyrannical tobacco companies, movies set almost entirely at McDonald's, and our choice of 15 different versions of "Friends," it frequently appears that the only socially sanctioned option, to any problem, is to buy more Pepsi.

MATTHEW P. MCALLISTER

■ Matthew P. McAllister, author of *The Commercialization of American Culture: New Advertising, Control and Democracy*, teaches at Virginia Tech.

Incorporating Images

Film and the Rival Arts

By Brigitte Peucker. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1995. $49.95 cloth; $16.95 paper.

For the past century, cinema has posed many special concerns to theorists of aesthetics. Early writers such as Lindsay, Arnheim, and Bazin attempted to describe the unique properties and effects of the film medium, especially as it related to other media and phenomena. Brigitte Peucker continues that project in *Incorporating Images*, and she makes her objective clear from the first sentence: "This book examines the problematic space that film occupies between the established arts of painting and literature" (3). Peucker argues that cinema has been seeking legitimation through these other arts, a struggle that she sees manifested most dramatically in the aestheticization of the human body. Her theorizing of the body in cinema is perhaps the book's most valuable contribution to film studies, although much needs to be said about her methods and propositions.

Peucker proceeds through three long chapters in which she considers how filmic movement (in editing and mise-en-scène) is bound to fragmentation, how the hybrid nature of cinema presents the medium as a "monstrous birth," and how the relationship between representation and the real in cinema bears upon the body/text and subject/object dynamics of art. She presents these

Consumer Culture is divided into two parts. The first part contextualizes and elaborates upon why advertising's influence over TV programming is increasing, and details the author's theoretical position, a position strongly influenced by Marxist critical studies. Chapter 1 highlights changes in advertising in the 1980s, discussing such factors as the decline in network ratings—leading to cuts in personnel and increased servitude toward advertisers—and the development of mega-media conglomerates. Chapter 2, focusing on the Nike company, takes a broader economic perspective than many traditional political economists who study advertising. Andersen explores laissez-faire free-trade policies and the betrayal of U.S. labor for corporate profits through downsizing, while contrasting such behavior with the promises of advertising and media content. As she concludes at the end of this chapter, "The paradox is this: By accepting Nike's offer of empowerment and liberation when we buy a pair of Nike shoes, we endorse and promote the very production practices and corporate policies that preclude our own economic well-being" (67). The next two chapters explore the increased use by advertising of focus-group research to tap into consumer needs and anxieties, and critique postmodernist views of consumer culture—such as that of Jean Baudrillard—for artificially severing connections between the economic and the cultural.

The second half of the book draws on techniques from cultural studies to show how different television genres are morphing into commercial forms. As the author notes, this morphing is sometimes obvious, like when "Seinfeld" devotes a whole program to the celebration of Pez or Junior Mints. However, there are also more subtle convergences between advertising and television programming; much of the discussion in these later chapters looks at the "therapeutic" approach taken by media content and how this approach mirrors advertising's basic selling tactics. As Andersen argues, advertising is therapeutic in the sense that it decontextualizes social issues by focusing on how individuals may simplistically solve their problems through product consumption. She scrutinizes television programming that reproduces this strategy by psychologizing social problems and deflecting attention away from structural causes.

Thus the program "thirtysomething," critiqued in chapter 5, not only defined the main characters' social group by "lifestyle"-defining commodity icons, but also tended to present anxieties about social problems as personality flaws solved through talk (or in Michael and Hope's case, yuppie whining). Such discourse, Andersen notes, reflects the background assumptions involved in "lifestyle marketing." Later chapters focus on the thematic convergence with advertising found in talk shows, mediated politics, coverage of the Persian Gulf War, and reality-based shows like "Cops."

Andersen has produced a book that persuasively, and frighteningly, accents how truly intertwined broadcasting and advertising have become. In its conclusion, she briefly discusses possible intervention strategies, such as politicizing consumption and reregulation. But the author's attempt at an optimistic ending is only halfhearted. This is understandable. In an era of Disney/ABC, tyrannical tobacco companies, movies set almost entirely at McDonald's, and our choice of 15 different versions of "Friends," it frequently appears that the only socially sanctioned option, to any problem, is to buy more Pepsi.

MATTHEW P. MCALLISTER

■ Matthew P. McAllister, author of *The Commercialization of American Culture: New Advertising, Control and Democracy*, teaches at Virginia Tech.

Incorporating Images

Film and the Rival Arts

By Brigitte Peucker. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1995. $49.95 cloth; $16.95 paper.

For the past century, cinema has posed many special concerns to theorists of aesthetics. Early writers such as Lindsay, Arnheim, and Bazin attempted to describe the unique properties and effects of the film medium, especially as it related to other media and phenomena. Brigitte Peucker continues that project in *Incorporating Images*, and she makes her objective clear from the first sentence: "This book examines the problematic space that film occupies between the established arts of painting and literature" (3). Peucker argues that cinema has been seeking legitimation through these other arts, a struggle that she sees manifested most dramatically in the aestheticization of the human body. Her theorizing of the body in cinema is perhaps the book's most valuable contribution to film studies, although much needs to be said about her methods and propositions.

Peucker proceeds through three long chapters in which she considers how filmic movement (in editing and mise-en-scène) is bound to fragmentation, how the hybrid nature of cinema presents the medium as a "monstrous birth," and how the relationship between representation and the real in cinema bears upon the body/text and subject/object dynamics of art. She presents these

ideas lucidly, but at least two dilemmas remain in her overall approach: she describes film in human terms, as if it were a personality in history, ascribing to it such feelings as jealousy, envy, and desire (indeed, this is how she sets up the "rivalry" between film and the other arts); and she develops her theses through analogy and extrapolation (often using psychoanalytic theory), which derails much of her otherwise insightful historical and aesthetic commentary on film and art. For example: "Linked to the uncanniness of the phantasmatic bodies it contains, film's self-understanding as a fissured text brings with it an underlying fear of castration and of death" (4). Such anthropomorphizing of the medium tends to disturb the place of the artist and the audience, granting film an autonomy that denies its complex creative and receptive processes. Further, the fears and other emotions to which she refers are never established, and it is unclear if they apply to the medium or the spectator. Her arguments are largely dependent upon presumptive phenomenological notions that often sound conspiratorial, as in, "It is in the interest of the camera to dismember the human body as it creates the film, perversely playing on the spectator's desire for the whole actor during the process" (19). Sometimes these notions are interesting; most of the time they are founded upon inferential and symptomatic readings that remain unconvincing.

Peucker relies on a wide base of theoretical influences, never settling on a previous scholar's ideas for very long. Diderot and Kleist are her primary sources in aesthetics, Elsaesser is her most common film reference, and of course Freud is employed, but not excessively. The films she argues from are not so eclectic. Griffith and Hitchcock (and Murnau's *Sunrise*) are the only non-European selections, and of her many European examples, most are German. One wonders how arguments about the development and use of art in relation to cinema apply from other cultural perspectives. Since Peucker's arguments are quite essentializing, this wonder poses a more profound question.

The first chapter is the most problematic. Here Peucker's personification of film and universal claims about cinematic practice vitiate her often thorough research and enlightening observations. Vague assertions and loaded puns are not rare; for example, "film both wants to deny its acts of dismemberment and is envious of an avant-garde that it quotes in order to place itself on the cutting edge" (21). Much of her argument about movement and fragmentation derives from analogical points about art that are virtually impossible to prove as significant. She often uses only one or two films to support generalizations such as, "The perception of fragmentation or dismemberment is a virtual sine qua non of the cinematic body for the spectator of films even during the Weimar period; this fear of fragmentation is an anxiety that the makers of films were at great pains to counteract" (27), which is supposedly exhibited by her analysis of *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*. Filmic elements such as close-ups and edits are fodder for her castration and dismemberment ideas, and regardless of the myriad uses and effects of these elements, she translates them as threats to the "organic unity" that "film would like to claim for its own." Again, these threats may or may not pertain to the audience as well, for it is hard to determine just how viewers are involved; for example, "if every film is a series of little murders that take place as each frame in the sequence is replaced by another . . . then filmic movement is implicated in the orientation toward death" (38). We must be witnesses to these murders in which editing and movement are culprits, but is there anything we can or want to do about it?

Peucker continues to portray film as an emotional freak in the second chapter, describing how it was conceived from other arts, yielding a heterogeneous form that—and this is the leap—has become a monstrosity "too jealous of its boundaries to take the encroachments of the neighboring arts lightly" (55). Hence another rivalry, not about form (as in the first chapter) but about purity and heredity. Peucker confidently brings in *Broken Blossoms* to demonstrate this case, as she sees the film's racist fears of miscegenation paralleling the paranoia cinema feels since it is the result of an unnatural union. Again, Peucker displays her appreciable knowledge of film history, in this case related to Griffith and his films, but it is often undermined by her metaphorical extrapolations, such as, "In *Broken Blossoms* the hybrid nature of film is repeatedly figured and denied in a series of sexual relations—incest, miscegenation, homoerotic unions—that are first suggested and then blocked" (65). Similar symptoms are found in the pathological characters in Hitchcock's films and the vampire in Murnau's *Nosferatu*, who "stands in for cinema as a hybrid text"—and yet the question remains whether these examples represent the range of her claims, or if all films exhibit certain characteristics that validate these artistic analogies. Perhaps the most striking analogy of film's role in art to movie narratives is Peucker's conclusion about *Sunrise*: "Although the heterosexual couple is reunited, just as pictorial and cinematic styles merge, the union is necessarily precarious, one that can only endure so long as controlled painterly compositions keep the upper hand" (84). Thus it is hard to tell if Peucker is working from a perspective similar to Lessing's *Laocoön* (in which the visual arts are organized spatially and the poetic arts are organized temporally), thereby endorsing a classification between the "rival" arts and film, or if she acts to unify the arts with the misunderstood and pathetic, but beautiful, monster of cinema.

The third chapter improves upon the first two, for here Peucker deals more consistently with the nature of film and art from historical and aesthetic perspectives, providing information about painting and literature that is more germane to cinema than her previous examples. Her argument is also more appropriate: that the artistic incorporation of reality into representation raises ontological questions across media. Using trompe-l'oeil techniques and the tableau vivant as examples, Peucker considers how we understand and use reality in and against art, making more trenchant—but still anthropomorphizing and arguable—claims, such as this notion that she develops from Benjamin:

> Aware of the flatness of its own image, cinema nevertheless plays its effects of spatial depth against the two-dimensionality that it reads in painting; a perceptual shift back and forth between these two dimensions shapes the point of view of the cinematic spectator (116).

A question that immediately arises, and remains unanswered in any concrete or practical terms, is how she comprehends the spectator. Peucker never presents a developed theory of viewing or phenomenology herself, and the few theorists' ideas she relies upon (e.g., Barthes, Metz, Baudrillard) have been rigorously challenged and revised, which she rarely acknowledges. Her ultimate concern in this chapter—the affective responses of viewers to film and art—is also an important topic that is muddled by her method. For instance, when she says that "by producing physical as well as emotional reactions in the spectator, Hitchcock initiates another instance of circulation between reality and the image, one which also brings the body into aesthetic response" (136), she not only ascribes an unsubstantiated intentionality to the film-maker (and she does this with many other directors as well), she again begs the essentialist question: Do all films that produce physical and emotional reactions (and many do) have this same effect? Indeed they may, but she needs more than the work of Hitchcock to prove it. Her concluding critiques of Wenders, Fassbinder, and Greenaway are incisive and carefully focused, yet this auteurist approach disrupts the encompassing ambitions of her argument.

Peucker addresses some lingering issues about film and art in her well-written conclusion to the book, not the least pressing of which is how new technologies are changing artistic production and reception. Once again Peucker demonstrates her concern about film in relation to other arts, even if her final position on the "rivalry" is difficult to discern. Perhaps the book raises more questions than it can answer, and in that way preserves the tradition of fundamental inquiries that were first generated about film, thereby offering a provocative point of reflection on these inquiries at the centennial of cinema. Nonetheless, Peucker's work may also remind us that essentialist arguments remain dubious, and that we can consider significant cinematic and aesthetic questions without resorting to pointlessly theorizing by analogy and extrapolation. Had Peucker not relied on this kind of theorizing, *Incorporating Images* would have been a more solid and accomplished study.

TIMOTHY SHARY

■ Timothy Shary is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Communication at the University of Massachusetts.

It Looks at You

The Returned Gaze of Cinema

By Wheeler Winston Dixon. Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1995. $16.95.

Implicit in Wheeler Winston Dixon's argument is the understanding of the duality of the gaze in visual representation as discussed by Jacques Lacan in *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis.* Lacan suggests that in any viewing subject/viewed object situation there is always a double take: he or she who looks is simultaneously the recipient of the gaze returned by the field outside the subject. Although, in an earlier stage, film theory sharply focused on the viewer as the effect rather than the author of the gaze, that line of thinking has been increasingly neglected. This may be because the subject's image it proposed was so bleak, so oppressive, so final, it seemed like a theoretical dead end. As Dixon puts it, instead of "being viewers of an external phenomenon, we are being acted upon by a mechanism possessing a gaze that stuns and transfixes us, like rabbits caught in the glare of a set of headlights" (43). Although the title of the book and the picture that illustrates its jacket (an anamorphically distorted, scary-looking image of Andy Warhol's face) suggest that Dixon's attention will be given exclusively to an Orwellian type of address, his work in fact takes up both these panopticlike, monarchic images shaped under the aegis of powerful individuals or states and those that attempt to escape that domination.

In a series of essays, Dixon first elaborates on Baudry's view of the cinema as a specular ideological apparatus. Bundling the earlier, rather essentialist theoretical construct with specific cinematic styles, as well as

The third chapter improves upon the first two, for here Peucker deals more consistently with the nature of film and art from historical and aesthetic perspectives, providing information about painting and literature that is more germane to cinema than her previous examples. Her argument is also more appropriate: that the artistic incorporation of reality into representation raises ontological questions across media. Using trompe-l'oeil techniques and the tableau vivant as examples, Peucker considers how we understand and use reality in and against art, making more trenchant—but still anthropomorphizing and arguable—claims, such as this notion that she develops from Benjamin:

> Aware of the flatness of its own image, cinema nevertheless plays its effects of spatial depth against the two-dimensionality that it reads in painting; a perceptual shift back and forth between these two dimensions shapes the point of view of the cinematic spectator (116).

A question that immediately arises, and remains unanswered in any concrete or practical terms, is how she comprehends the spectator. Peucker never presents a developed theory of viewing or phenomenology herself, and the few theorists' ideas she relies upon (e.g., Barthes, Metz, Baudrillard) have been rigorously challenged and revised, which she rarely acknowledges. Her ultimate concern in this chapter—the affective responses of viewers to film and art—is also an important topic that is muddled by her method. For instance, when she says that "by producing physical as well as emotional reactions in the spectator, Hitchcock initiates another instance of circulation between reality and the image, one which also brings the body into aesthetic response" (136), she not only ascribes an unsubstantiated intentionality to the film-maker (and she does this with many other directors as well), she again begs the essentialist question: Do all films that produce physical and emotional reactions (and many do) have this same effect? Indeed they may, but she needs more than the work of Hitchcock to prove it. Her concluding critiques of Wenders, Fassbinder, and Greenaway are incisive and carefully focused, yet this auteurist approach disrupts the encompassing ambitions of her argument.

Peucker addresses some lingering issues about film and art in her well-written conclusion to the book, not the least pressing of which is how new technologies are changing artistic production and reception. Once again Peucker demonstrates her concern about film in relation to other arts, even if her final position on the "rivalry" is difficult to discern. Perhaps the book raises more questions than it can answer, and in that way preserves the tradition of fundamental inquiries that were first generated about film, thereby offering a provocative point of reflection on these inquiries at the centennial of cinema. Nonetheless, Peucker's work may also remind us that essentialist arguments remain dubious, and that we can consider significant cinematic and aesthetic questions without resorting to pointlessly theorizing by analogy and extrapolation. Had Peucker not relied on this kind of theorizing, *Incorporating Images* would have been a more solid and accomplished study.

TIMOTHY SHARY

■ Timothy Shary is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Communication at the University of Massachusetts.

It Looks at You

The Returned Gaze of Cinema

By Wheeler Winston Dixon. Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1995. $16.95.

Implicit in Wheeler Winston Dixon's argument is the understanding of the duality of the gaze in visual representation as discussed by Jacques Lacan in *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis.* Lacan suggests that in any viewing subject/viewed object situation there is always a double take: he or she who looks is simultaneously the recipient of the gaze returned by the field outside the subject. Although, in an earlier stage, film theory sharply focused on the viewer as the effect rather than the author of the gaze, that line of thinking has been increasingly neglected. This may be because the subject's image it proposed was so bleak, so oppressive, so final, it seemed like a theoretical dead end. As Dixon puts it, instead of "being viewers of an external phenomenon, we are being acted upon by a mechanism possessing a gaze that stuns and transfixes us, like rabbits caught in the glare of a set of headlights" (43). Although the title of the book and the picture that illustrates its jacket (an anamorphically distorted, scary-looking image of Andy Warhol's face) suggest that Dixon's attention will be given exclusively to an Orwellian type of address, his work in fact takes up both these panopticlike, monarchic images shaped under the aegis of powerful individuals or states and those that attempt to escape that domination.

In a series of essays, Dixon first elaborates on Baudry's view of the cinema as a specular ideological apparatus. Bundling the earlier, rather essentialist theoretical construct with specific cinematic styles, as well as

more recent developments generated on video or television, he is able to represent the whole as the head of the Gorgon, an entire system of production, projection, and reception that "transfixes the audience in a state of willing immobility" (2). Although Dixon exactingly retraces direct address in the cinema from the early silent films onward, spending some time with Dr. Mabuse and other screen villains who literally hypnotize or terrorize characters and spectators alike, he most effectively builds his case when discussing—à la Kracauer—a long series of more contemporary tyrannical apparatuses of domination: surveillance cameras, electronic courtrooms, gadgets that monitor one's activities, direct address infomercials, interactive video games, etc. Here Dixon is especially good at tracing the narrative maneuvering that forces the mesmerized viewer into malevolent territory, from the nasty subjective shots of many horror films, where spectators must share the killer's viewpoint, to the more recent bunch of interactive video games, where the only role assigned to the participant is to kill or maim the enemy at a rate of one violent act every 18 seconds. In such escalation, using Lacan's vocabulary, we move from a cinema/video as *dompte-regard*—one whose goal is to tame the gaze—to one in which the gaze literally kills. To counter such doomsday scenarios in film, video, and television, Dixon brings up a series of alternative reflexive strategies.

First he looks at a group of texts that refuse to privilege the traditional voyeur's position. He places in this category films by Andy Warhol, Jean-Marie Straub, and Stan Brakhage, and the later works of Roberto Rossellini. In each case, it is the style of the film—whether some general inattention to the usual polish of film enunciation, the use of the long take, or a complete lack of sound track—rather than the subject matter or direct address from the performers that ushers in a sense of a returned gaze from the screen. It might be argued that these films mete out a different kind of voyeurism, one which shuns the *donner-à-voir* (Lacan again), the showing-off of a sanctioned spectacle, in favor of a cinema whose very indifference to the audience's expectations paradoxically provides a stronger sense of unauthorized scopophilia. Indeed, both André Bazin and Christian Metz struggled at one time to assert a distinction between these divergent types of pleasure.

Second, more controversially perhaps, he proposes that key films by directors such as Derek Jarman, Terence Davies, Chantal Akerman, Sally Potter, and Gregg Araki somehow manage to "disrupt the mirror-screen arrangement, opening space to an *infinite* mirror, opening identity to a pregendered state of Kristevan 'chore'" (79). Here Dixon argues that not only do these films differ from the canon by offering viewers the possibility of numerous sexual identities, they also deviate from conventional narrative discourse by questioning the very construct of the film being made. Together with the work of other film-makers such as Trinh T. Minh-ha, Yvonne Rainer, and Julie Dash, these films succeed in opening multiple spaces of contestation that may at times provide an alternative to the normative gender roles in the conventional cinema.

In a chapter called "Dreams of the State," Dixon nevertheless recognizes the outright marginalization of the texts that have strayed beyond Hollywood's standards, cinemas "of looks and returned gazes articulating the gestures and desires of those whose tale is not told in traditional cinema" (148). He notices, for instance, that less than one percent of non-Western films have ever been released (even minimally) in Europe or the United States. As the situation in video stores has by now duplicated the distribution pattern in the theaters, Dixon finds himself calling for scholars "to disseminate the fact of the existence of these 'other' cinemas" (157). The battlefield he has in mind is, of course, the classroom. This may not be enough though; in the largest film and television schools at least, his exhortation is already department policy, and the canon surely remains unweakened. American film classes are full to the brim, whereas Third World, documentary, and avant-garde courses have a hard time meeting minimum enrollment numbers. Students, in other words, are fast resisting the faculty's admonitions.

To account for this, one may have to go back to the 50s, when Truffaut, Godard, Chabrol, and the other writers of the *Cahiers du Cinéma* were calling for a reconsideration of the American cinema and an upheaval in French film-making. By so doing, they were in fact pushing some popular products of the U.S. culture industry against the French "cinema of quality," a move that legitimized the immediate gratification peddled by Hollywood. Today the situation is therefore reversed as academics are now the only voices endorsing—in specialized publications and books—complex theories and marginal cinemas in a style that is often perceived as stuffy and elitist by most undergraduates. To have a serious impact, Dixon's call to arms should thus reach beyond the classroom and gain a hearing within the culture at large. Truffaut and company had this right at least: you cannot engage theoretical reflection in a vacuum; you cannot ignore the messy world on the outside where films are conceived, created, distributed, and reviewed for the general public. They wrote in a commercially successful magazine and they addressed their complaints to as large an audience as possible. Transplanted into this country today, they would review films for the local news, they would create public access talk shows about films, they would debate the representatives of the system at every opportunity in every available sphere.

Until we force our voices to echo beyond our present sanctuaries, *Premiere* will remain the most influential film magazine in the land, the American cinema the only one worthy of attention, and most students will keep looking at us as the mere representatives of an arcane, if presumptuous, institutional culture. In other words, we—not Hollywood—have become the enemy. We owe much to Dixon (a film-maker as well as a theorist) for bringing these issues out into the open.

JEAN-PIERRE GEUENS

■ Jean-Pierre Geuens teaches in the School of Cinema-Television at USC.

The Radical Faces of Godard and Bertolucci

By Yosefa Loshitzky. Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1995. $44.95 cloth; $18.95 paper.

Since May 1968, European auteurs—from Godard to Fassbinder, Jancsó to Bertolucci—have wrestled with the question of revolution: What is the nature of revolution and, by extension, revolutionary film? The answers—in the shape of films ranging from *Le gai savoir* to *The Third Generation*, from *The Red and the White* to *The Conformist*—form a continuum across two poles. Some film-makers, led by Godard, insisted that the times required a new film language, one that was free of the ideological implications of classical Hollywood cinema. Others, represented by Bertolucci, maintained that criticism of the system could exist within the boundaries of established cinematic conventions and genres. Yosefa Loshitzky has taken the tension between these positions, and the resulting dialectic between these two exemplary directors, as the starting point of her informative comparison.

Aficionados are well aware of the strangely Oedipal relationship between Godard and Bertolucci. Bertolucci's first films, especially *Before the Revolution* and *Partner*, are self-consciously Godardian in their references and syntax, and he has admitted on more than one occasion to a certain "anxiety of influence" (which he overcame symbolically with the assassination of the professor in *The Conformist*). On the other hand, Godard, during his radical period, bitterly criticized his former disciple for conforming to the demands of bourgeois cinema. To Loshitzky's credit, she does not confine or reduce her discussion to psychoanalytic models. Instead, she uses the relationship as a starting point for a series of close readings informed by a wide range of discourses and methods, including critical theory, postmodernist debates, feminism, and postcolonial literature.

The first two chapters offer overviews of each director's radical period. The first succinctly and usefully reviews the influence of the events of May 1968 on Godard's work, and discusses his involvement with the Dziga Vertov Group and his collaboration with Anne-Marie Miéville. A close reading of *Tout va bien*, however, takes up most of this chapter. Loshitzky maintains that this film "epitomizes Godard's solution" to his dilemma of "how to make political films politically" (48). Given that the film attempted to reconcile, according to Robin Wood, "revolutionary art with the pleasure principle"—one of the central issues of this book—Loshitzky's reasons for selecting this film for lengthy analysis over, say, *Le gai savoir,* are clear. Yet her reading of the film ultimately adds little to the already voluminous literature on Godard. Indeed, while the roster of Brechtian devices in the film provides a convenient checklist, her conclusion that *Tout va bien* "stresses that artworks are constructions, objects produced by people, and as such obey ideologically determined codes" (48) is, at best, unsurprising.

The book does get better as it progresses, but the quality of the close readings remains uneven. Chapter 2, for instance, focuses on Bertolucci's radical period, especially *The Conformist* and *Last Tango in Paris*. Loshitzky's explication of the connections between Marcuse's *Eros and Civilization* and *Last Tango* is enlightening, giving the film an interesting and original radical spin, but the discussion of the Proustian and political dimension of *The Conformist* breaks little new ground. Loshitzky is actually at her best when comparing the films of Godard and Bertolucci side by side, and showing their intertwining themes and concerns. The third chapter begins with a persuasive demonstration of the postmodern sensibility of Bertolucci's *Tragedy of a Ridiculous Man*, as well as showing how "the exorcism of Godard's trademarks from the visual discourse enable Bertolucci to consciously cope with his anxiety of influence, and to assert his own directorial signature" (88). The readings of Godard's "Trilogy of the Sublime" (*Passion*, *Prénom Carmen*, and *Hail Mary*) and *Nouvelle Vague* shed light on Godard's religious preoccupations and their resonance with Bertolucci's similar concerns. While Godard looks inward for spirituality, Bertolucci turns toward the Other "in a quest for his own paradise lost" (99) that takes him from Beijing to the Sahara.

This quest manifests itself in Bertolucci's *The Last Emperor* and *The Sheltering Sky*, which receive lengthy treatment in the fourth chapter. Freudian and Lacanian terminology buttress Loshitzky's argument that "the sty-

Until we force our voices to echo beyond our present sanctuaries, *Premiere* will remain the most influential film magazine in the land, the American cinema the only one worthy of attention, and most students will keep looking at us as the mere representatives of an arcane, if presumptuous, institutional culture. In other words, we—not Hollywood—have become the enemy. We owe much to Dixon (a film-maker as well as a theorist) for bringing these issues out into the open.

JEAN-PIERRE GEUENS

■ Jean-Pierre Geuens teaches in the School of Cinema-Television at USC.

The Radical Faces of Godard and Bertolucci

By Yosefa Loshitzky. Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1995. $44.95 cloth; $18.95 paper.

Since May 1968, European auteurs—from Godard to Fassbinder, Jancsó to Bertolucci—have wrestled with the question of revolution: What is the nature of revolution and, by extension, revolutionary film? The answers—in the shape of films ranging from *Le gai savoir* to *The Third Generation*, from *The Red and the White* to *The Conformist*—form a continuum across two poles. Some film-makers, led by Godard, insisted that the times required a new film language, one that was free of the ideological implications of classical Hollywood cinema. Others, represented by Bertolucci, maintained that criticism of the system could exist within the boundaries of established cinematic conventions and genres. Yosefa Loshitzky has taken the tension between these positions, and the resulting dialectic between these two exemplary directors, as the starting point of her informative comparison.

Aficionados are well aware of the strangely Oedipal relationship between Godard and Bertolucci. Bertolucci's first films, especially *Before the Revolution* and *Partner*, are self-consciously Godardian in their references and syntax, and he has admitted on more than one occasion to a certain "anxiety of influence" (which he overcame symbolically with the assassination of the professor in *The Conformist*). On the other hand, Godard, during his radical period, bitterly criticized his former disciple for conforming to the demands of bourgeois cinema. To Loshitzky's credit, she does not confine or reduce her discussion to psychoanalytic models. Instead, she uses the relationship as a starting point for a series of close readings informed by a wide range of discourses and methods, including critical theory, postmodernist debates, feminism, and postcolonial literature.

The first two chapters offer overviews of each director's radical period. The first succinctly and usefully reviews the influence of the events of May 1968 on Godard's work, and discusses his involvement with the Dziga Vertov Group and his collaboration with Anne-Marie Miéville. A close reading of *Tout va bien*, however, takes up most of this chapter. Loshitzky maintains that this film "epitomizes Godard's solution" to his dilemma of "how to make political films politically" (48). Given that the film attempted to reconcile, according to Robin Wood, "revolutionary art with the pleasure principle"—one of the central issues of this book—Loshitzky's reasons for selecting this film for lengthy analysis over, say, *Le gai savoir,* are clear. Yet her reading of the film ultimately adds little to the already voluminous literature on Godard. Indeed, while the roster of Brechtian devices in the film provides a convenient checklist, her conclusion that *Tout va bien* "stresses that artworks are constructions, objects produced by people, and as such obey ideologically determined codes" (48) is, at best, unsurprising.

The book does get better as it progresses, but the quality of the close readings remains uneven. Chapter 2, for instance, focuses on Bertolucci's radical period, especially *The Conformist* and *Last Tango in Paris*. Loshitzky's explication of the connections between Marcuse's *Eros and Civilization* and *Last Tango* is enlightening, giving the film an interesting and original radical spin, but the discussion of the Proustian and political dimension of *The Conformist* breaks little new ground. Loshitzky is actually at her best when comparing the films of Godard and Bertolucci side by side, and showing their intertwining themes and concerns. The third chapter begins with a persuasive demonstration of the postmodern sensibility of Bertolucci's *Tragedy of a Ridiculous Man*, as well as showing how "the exorcism of Godard's trademarks from the visual discourse enable Bertolucci to consciously cope with his anxiety of influence, and to assert his own directorial signature" (88). The readings of Godard's "Trilogy of the Sublime" (*Passion*, *Prénom Carmen*, and *Hail Mary*) and *Nouvelle Vague* shed light on Godard's religious preoccupations and their resonance with Bertolucci's similar concerns. While Godard looks inward for spirituality, Bertolucci turns toward the Other "in a quest for his own paradise lost" (99) that takes him from Beijing to the Sahara.

This quest manifests itself in Bertolucci's *The Last Emperor* and *The Sheltering Sky*, which receive lengthy treatment in the fourth chapter. Freudian and Lacanian terminology buttress Loshitzky's argument that "the sty-

listic structure of *Emperor*, as well as the organization of the narrative, inevitably lead to the symbolic annihilation of women" (104). This clear feminist critique of Bertolucci's work leads to *The Sheltering Sky* and the place of the Other in his oeuvre. Drawing upon recent research on travel literature, Loshitzky is able to establish a number of thematic links between colonial discourse and this film. Yet what promises to be an exciting discussion remains oddly uninteresting, largely because of rather literal readings of the texts. Armed with a laundry list of themes, she sometimes lapses into a tedious "find-the-example" style of close analysis, skimming only the surface of the issues she attempts to elucidate.

This tendency continues in the last two chapters, which deal with Godard's and Bertolucci's images of women and sexuality. Because the work of neither director has received extensive feminist analysis, these pages are especially welcome. Loshitzky offers a comprehensive survey of Godard's representation of women from his New Wave period to his latest films, concluding that his treatment of women and sexuality "metamorphosizes in direct relation to the different stages in his career," changing from "romantic libertinage (the New Wave period) to metapornography (the radical period), coming finally in its current phase to embrace the Christian ideal of non-corporeal, spiritual love" (170). Despite Godard's influence in this regard, Bertolucci's "female characters are represented and perceived exclusively within the boundaries of the sexual domain and are never depicted as able to transcend it" (195). While Bertolucci's images of female sexuality may be retrograde, Loshitzky also successfully demonstrates the political power of his representations of sexual ambiguity. Both chapters succumb to recitation of themes and examples, but Loshitzky's genuine contribution is her reminder of the importance of sexuality for both directors' radical politics.

Indeed, her investigation takes up the very possibility of a radical cinema; the choice between revolution and reform is not so simple, and the book demonstrates quite well how Godard and Bertolucci have explored options between these alternatives. The strength of the book lies, finally, in its comparison of the ambivalences and subtleties within each director's work—and the creative impact each has had on the other—over the course of nearly 30 years. While the close readings of the films can sometimes be disappointing, bringing these two directors face-to-face for the first time in a book-length study illuminates the complexity of their work and celebrates their mutual influence.

SCOTT CURTIS

■ Scott Curtis is a doctoral candidate in Film Studies at the University of Iowa.

The End

Narration and Closure in the Cinema

By Richard Neupert. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1995. $19.95.

Until the 1985 publication of David Bordwell's decisive text, *Narration in Fiction Film,* interest in narratology appeared to be on the wane; the glory years of the field seemed to be a thing of the (recent) past, rooted as it was in French theory of the late 1960s and early 1970s, before being co-opted by the British and then the North Americans. Bordwell's book sparked a resurgence of interest in the study of narrative, and stimulated a trend toward meshing issues of narrative theory with questions of film style and phenomenology. *The End: Narration and Closure in the Cinema* is symptomatic of this tendency, and clearly an offshoot of Bordwell's intervention. The objective of Neupert's book is proclaimed by his title. His intention is to explicate the workings of different categories of film narrative through an examination of their endings. He begins his work with an intelligent and well-formulated summary of the major tendencies in narratology, dexterously weaving together strands from a variety of models. Neupert's most significant tutors in the formulation of his arguments, as cited in this introductory chapter, are Genette, Prince, Barthes, Metz, Todorov, and Bordwell.

Neupert's own theory is a mélange of textual and structural analysis, with elements of cognitive psychology and reception theory and a nod to ideological criticism thrown in for good measure. His first move is to bifurcate narrative into story and discourse (pace Seymour Chatman). There is nothing original in his definitions of these terms: story consists of "a series of interrelated functions, indices, informants, and characters, each of which has a varying effect on the micro-level resolutions within individual scenes," while narrative discourse is "the site where the narrative voice, discursive style, and point of view operate."

In each chapter Neupert performs a close analysis of the narrative operations of a single film (or in one case, several films). He then creates a structural grid comprised of the following classifications: Closed Text/Closed Discourse; Open Text/Closed Discourse; Closed Text/Open Discourse; Open Text/Open Discourse. His taxonomy falls along familiar lines: the closed categories conform to the rules of classicism (unified story, time/space continuums, motivated characters, etc.), while the open categories comply with Bordwell's descriptions of "art cinema," i.e., working against homogeneity, clarity, linearity, plausibility, etc. Neupert looks

listic structure of *Emperor*, as well as the organization of the narrative, inevitably lead to the symbolic annihilation of women" (104). This clear feminist critique of Bertolucci's work leads to *The Sheltering Sky* and the place of the Other in his oeuvre. Drawing upon recent research on travel literature, Loshitzky is able to establish a number of thematic links between colonial discourse and this film. Yet what promises to be an exciting discussion remains oddly uninteresting, largely because of rather literal readings of the texts. Armed with a laundry list of themes, she sometimes lapses into a tedious "find-the-example" style of close analysis, skimming only the surface of the issues she attempts to elucidate.

This tendency continues in the last two chapters, which deal with Godard's and Bertolucci's images of women and sexuality. Because the work of neither director has received extensive feminist analysis, these pages are especially welcome. Loshitzky offers a comprehensive survey of Godard's representation of women from his New Wave period to his latest films, concluding that his treatment of women and sexuality "metamorphosizes in direct relation to the different stages in his career," changing from "romantic libertinage (the New Wave period) to metapornography (the radical period), coming finally in its current phase to embrace the Christian ideal of non-corporeal, spiritual love" (170). Despite Godard's influence in this regard, Bertolucci's "female characters are represented and perceived exclusively within the boundaries of the sexual domain and are never depicted as able to transcend it" (195). While Bertolucci's images of female sexuality may be retrograde, Loshitzky also successfully demonstrates the political power of his representations of sexual ambiguity. Both chapters succumb to recitation of themes and examples, but Loshitzky's genuine contribution is her reminder of the importance of sexuality for both directors' radical politics.

Indeed, her investigation takes up the very possibility of a radical cinema; the choice between revolution and reform is not so simple, and the book demonstrates quite well how Godard and Bertolucci have explored options between these alternatives. The strength of the book lies, finally, in its comparison of the ambivalences and subtleties within each director's work—and the creative impact each has had on the other—over the course of nearly 30 years. While the close readings of the films can sometimes be disappointing, bringing these two directors face-to-face for the first time in a book-length study illuminates the complexity of their work and celebrates their mutual influence.

SCOTT CURTIS

■ Scott Curtis is a doctoral candidate in Film Studies at the University of Iowa.

The End

Narration and Closure in the Cinema

By Richard Neupert. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1995. $19.95.

Until the 1985 publication of David Bordwell's decisive text, *Narration in Fiction Film,* interest in narratology appeared to be on the wane; the glory years of the field seemed to be a thing of the (recent) past, rooted as it was in French theory of the late 1960s and early 1970s, before being co-opted by the British and then the North Americans. Bordwell's book sparked a resurgence of interest in the study of narrative, and stimulated a trend toward meshing issues of narrative theory with questions of film style and phenomenology. *The End: Narration and Closure in the Cinema* is symptomatic of this tendency, and clearly an offshoot of Bordwell's intervention. The objective of Neupert's book is proclaimed by his title. His intention is to explicate the workings of different categories of film narrative through an examination of their endings. He begins his work with an intelligent and well-formulated summary of the major tendencies in narratology, dexterously weaving together strands from a variety of models. Neupert's most significant tutors in the formulation of his arguments, as cited in this introductory chapter, are Genette, Prince, Barthes, Metz, Todorov, and Bordwell.

Neupert's own theory is a mélange of textual and structural analysis, with elements of cognitive psychology and reception theory and a nod to ideological criticism thrown in for good measure. His first move is to bifurcate narrative into story and discourse (pace Seymour Chatman). There is nothing original in his definitions of these terms: story consists of "a series of interrelated functions, indices, informants, and characters, each of which has a varying effect on the micro-level resolutions within individual scenes," while narrative discourse is "the site where the narrative voice, discursive style, and point of view operate."

In each chapter Neupert performs a close analysis of the narrative operations of a single film (or in one case, several films). He then creates a structural grid comprised of the following classifications: Closed Text/Closed Discourse; Open Text/Closed Discourse; Closed Text/Open Discourse; Open Text/Open Discourse. His taxonomy falls along familiar lines: the closed categories conform to the rules of classicism (unified story, time/space continuums, motivated characters, etc.), while the open categories comply with Bordwell's descriptions of "art cinema," i.e., working against homogeneity, clarity, linearity, plausibility, etc. Neupert looks

toward a film's resolution, or lack thereof, to determine which system is at work, and the impact of that form on both the spectator and the film. In some ways, Neupert's strategy is an inverted reenactment of Thierry Kuntzel's "Le travail du film," wherein the textual system of a film is purportedly determined by the film's opening shot. Methodologically, Neupert's work has far more of an investment in scientificism than Kuntzel's, and it is this quality that is one of the book's limitations.

In his quest to "forge vocabulary and methodology for understanding the textual and spectating activities that produce or threaten narrative closure" and a "rigorous system of analysis for narrative film endings" (177), Neupert comes up with a recipe, a programmatic design that ultimately says very little that is new or interesting about the nature of film narrative. Once one has "named" a film as open or closed, what has one really determined beyond the designation? Neupert's quest for geometric rigor leads him to the embarrassing position of proposing a hypothetical category—Closed Text/Open Discourse—which, by his own admission, doesn't truly exist.

Neupert's readings of individual films are intelligent, but there are few moments of interpretive inspiration and little that is fresh, playful, witty, or passionate in his work. It seems almost odd, then, when Neupert writes that "we learn more about narrative and multiple functions of endings by devoting three-fourths of this study to films that challenge most actively conventional resolution and closure" (179). While Neupert champions the "open" extremities of his schema, both his writing and the agenda that subtends his program are anything but open. He writes: "The Open Text stands as one *lively* [emphasis mine] alternative to the Closed Text's secure buckling of resolution and closure" (75). Even while he articulates the complexity of address in Ford's *The Quiet Man*, Neupert reveals a (grudging) bias against classicism, a love/hate relationship with classical cinema as "good object." Surely rich, fully realized classical narratives would hold at least as much interest as the films Neupert describes in his mythical Open Discourse category.

As an advocate of openness, Neupert says that Open Discourse films would radically challenge notions of fiction, documentary, and experimental cinema. He offers as an example of this "radical" challenge the ending of Bresson's *Pickpocket*, where nondiegetic music continues for a *full minute* after the credits end. This hardly seems worth getting excited about. Perhaps what Neupert needs are more case studies of different types of films, or more interstitial examples (along the lines of Closed Text/Open Discourse) to make his case more compelling and believable. The focus on the end of a film's narrative may in fact provide instructive access to film narratology, but Neupert's book fails to adequately convince the reader why the resolution of a film should claim our attention any more than the film's entire structure.

CAROLE ZUCKER

■ Carole Zucker teaches at Concordia University, Montreal.

The Unruly Woman

Gender and the Genres of Laughter

By Kathleen Rowe. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1995. $17.95.

Kathleen Rowe offers her book as an antidote to feminist film theory's past decade of "ennui": first, by linking that theory to theories of literary and onscreen comedy, with the aim of using each to correct previously unnoticed blind spots in the other; second, by expanding her range of screen texts considered beyond classical Hollywood film to the comparatively unexamined realm of television; and lastly, by finding a feminist utopian potential in mainstream moving images, where little such potential has been perceived before. The sweep of *The Unruly Woman*'s argument is huge. Rowe moves from a reading of the sign systems at work around Roseanne and Miss Piggy to a revisionist her-story of big-screen romantic comedies from the 30s through the 80s. The project's focus throughout is "the unruly woman," a carnivalesque figure who inverts gender norms as a "woman on top," dominating men and freely feeding her own hungers for food, sex, talk, laughter, and command.

Rowe finds both an alternative to patriarchal society's endemic positioning of women on the side of tears and loss, and a suggestion that such a society may yet hold the seeds for a transformation of itself, in the persistence of the unruly woman "at the margins of Western history for centuries" (31). And though she considers sources from the medieval plays and paintings where Natalie Zemon Davis first identified her to Roseanne's sitcom, the "woman on top" is thinner than she might be, as a historical figure and as a sociopolitical one. While Rowe uncovers compelling resonances between Miss Piggy, Roseanne, and past mythic and literary examples of unruly women, she only skims the history of women's representation on TV, which could more fully flesh out the connections and disjunctions between television's unruly women and those of classical Hollywood. Also left for other writers to pursue are

toward a film's resolution, or lack thereof, to determine which system is at work, and the impact of that form on both the spectator and the film. In some ways, Neupert's strategy is an inverted reenactment of Thierry Kuntzel's "Le travail du film," wherein the textual system of a film is purportedly determined by the film's opening shot. Methodologically, Neupert's work has far more of an investment in scientificism than Kuntzel's, and it is this quality that is one of the book's limitations.

In his quest to "forge vocabulary and methodology for understanding the textual and spectating activities that produce or threaten narrative closure" and a "rigorous system of analysis for narrative film endings" (177), Neupert comes up with a recipe, a programmatic design that ultimately says very little that is new or interesting about the nature of film narrative. Once one has "named" a film as open or closed, what has one really determined beyond the designation? Neupert's quest for geometric rigor leads him to the embarrassing position of proposing a hypothetical category—Closed Text/Open Discourse—which, by his own admission, doesn't truly exist.

Neupert's readings of individual films are intelligent, but there are few moments of interpretive inspiration and little that is fresh, playful, witty, or passionate in his work. It seems almost odd, then, when Neupert writes that "we learn more about narrative and multiple functions of endings by devoting three-fourths of this study to films that challenge most actively conventional resolution and closure" (179). While Neupert champions the "open" extremities of his schema, both his writing and the agenda that subtends his program are anything but open. He writes: "The Open Text stands as one *lively* [emphasis mine] alternative to the Closed Text's secure buckling of resolution and closure" (75). Even while he articulates the complexity of address in Ford's *The Quiet Man*, Neupert reveals a (grudging) bias against classicism, a love/hate relationship with classical cinema as "good object." Surely rich, fully realized classical narratives would hold at least as much interest as the films Neupert describes in his mythical Open Discourse category.

As an advocate of openness, Neupert says that Open Discourse films would radically challenge notions of fiction, documentary, and experimental cinema. He offers as an example of this "radical" challenge the ending of Bresson's *Pickpocket*, where nondiegetic music continues for a *full minute* after the credits end. This hardly seems worth getting excited about. Perhaps what Neupert needs are more case studies of different types of films, or more interstitial examples (along the lines of Closed Text/Open Discourse) to make his case more compelling and believable. The focus on the end of a film's narrative may in fact provide instructive access to film narratology, but Neupert's book fails to adequately convince the reader why the resolution of a film should claim our attention any more than the film's entire structure.

CAROLE ZUCKER

■ Carole Zucker teaches at Concordia University, Montreal.

The Unruly Woman

Gender and the Genres of Laughter

By Kathleen Rowe. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1995. $17.95.

Kathleen Rowe offers her book as an antidote to feminist film theory's past decade of "ennui": first, by linking that theory to theories of literary and onscreen comedy, with the aim of using each to correct previously unnoticed blind spots in the other; second, by expanding her range of screen texts considered beyond classical Hollywood film to the comparatively unexamined realm of television; and lastly, by finding a feminist utopian potential in mainstream moving images, where little such potential has been perceived before. The sweep of *The Unruly Woman*'s argument is huge. Rowe moves from a reading of the sign systems at work around Roseanne and Miss Piggy to a revisionist her-story of big-screen romantic comedies from the 30s through the 80s. The project's focus throughout is "the unruly woman," a carnivalesque figure who inverts gender norms as a "woman on top," dominating men and freely feeding her own hungers for food, sex, talk, laughter, and command.

Rowe finds both an alternative to patriarchal society's endemic positioning of women on the side of tears and loss, and a suggestion that such a society may yet hold the seeds for a transformation of itself, in the persistence of the unruly woman "at the margins of Western history for centuries" (31). And though she considers sources from the medieval plays and paintings where Natalie Zemon Davis first identified her to Roseanne's sitcom, the "woman on top" is thinner than she might be, as a historical figure and as a sociopolitical one. While Rowe uncovers compelling resonances between Miss Piggy, Roseanne, and past mythic and literary examples of unruly women, she only skims the history of women's representation on TV, which could more fully flesh out the connections and disjunctions between television's unruly women and those of classical Hollywood. Also left for other writers to pursue are

films and videos concerned with a more radical subversion of patriarchal norms than the types of "gender inversion" traced by Rowe as central to the unruly woman's transgression. The unruly women Rowe examines unsettle, but do not unseat, gendered hierarchies; they stay within the traditionally female realms of romance/domesticity and of heterosexuality implied by the unstated structuring term "the man," on top of whom they strive to be.

And with typical care and clarity, Rowe acknowledges these limits. Like the very popular texts it reads, *The Unruly Woman* "speaks to powerful needs to believe in the utopian possibilities condensed on the image of the [male-female] couple" and of the nuclear family (212)—needs whose popular representations can reveal as much about the changes those representations demand and the energy they draw from hegemonic institutions like heterosexuality and maternity as about the reinforcement they give them. Rowe also plainly states that she is bringing together two far-flung lines of inquiry, shifting methodological gears from a "semiotic" to a "narrative" approach between the book's first and second parts.

Rowe begins with the argument that feminist film theorists have neglected the representations of female subjectivity that she finds in the figure of the unruly woman on film and TV. This is because a Lacanian framework more neatly encloses women's tears and male-defined visual objectification in melodramas than women's laughter, anger, violence, and self-defined bodily, spectacular, and narrative "excess" and control in the "genres of laughter" (a phrase she takes from a 1985 essay by Laura Mulvey to describe "forms of narrative and performance associated with carnival," the Bakhtinian social and literary space of anti-authoritarian border play [222, note 4]). Rowe takes as a model the 1982 Dutch film *A Question of Silence*. In it, three women unexpectedly kill a man and then stymie court proceedings against them when they, and the female psychoanalyst assigned to their case, break into laughter at the court's inability to understand their motives. The film is particularly apt because it plays out a shifting of the terms of Mary Ann Doane's 1982 "Film and the Masquerade: Theorizing the Female Spectator," film theory's best-known reading of women and the joke. Doane, following Freud, positions women as always only the butt of jokes shared between men, never able to laugh except as transvestites or masochists. Rowe, however, maintains that the joke can be and has been turned against men by female subject-authors, on and behind the screen.

The first half of the book goes on to map out consistent "signifiers of female unruliness," including a desire to author one's own existence and to dictate to men; a love of jokes and laughter; a large body and a loud, garrulous voice; androgyny; advanced age; ambivalently received sexual openness and ambiguity; and a dangerous and yet endangered position on a society's "dirty" margins (31). Roseanne's tabloid-strewn image meshes beautifully into the centuries-wide unruly intertext that Rowe reveals. The transition between the book's first and second halves leaves open the questions of exactly how, and how much, it is women's bodies (in the realms of acting and stardom)—as opposed to women's stories (in the realms of narrative and mise-en-scène)—that exert subversive power through unruliness.

The movie-star heroines in the book's second half are far more "subdued" than Roseanne in their vocal and bodily deployment of the key unruly traits. Instead, Rowe derives (from Northrop Frye's reading of New Comedy) a model of these romantic comedies' narrative unruliness, centered in the (positive) Oedipal story of heterosexual subject formation and, most importantly, "the space, albeit limited, it ensures for the feminine" (109). A female character's unruliness in classical Hollywood narrative consists of her ability to see her side of that story told; the "gender inversion" at play involves precisely the female protagonist's desires to lead—to first see, shape, and amplify—the male's, as much as if not more than his do hers.

One of Rowe's most powerful analytical gestures is to show that romantic comedy and melodrama complement and comment upon each other not only across films (as genres), but also within films (as modes). Across time, likewise, she sees the forces of melodrama gathering to contain female unruliness while the forces of comedy incite it. As Rowe traces her, the unruly woman flourished in movies until the 50s, when she surfaced on TV: "While film placed the unruly woman in plots about romantic love that made use of the medium's capacity to tap the Imaginary, TV placed her in situations that reflected its own consumption in the home" (79–80).

But the very type of unruly plot Rowe identifies in film figures centrally in an 80s cycle of "workplace romance" sitcoms and light dramas, such as "Cheers" and "Moonlighting." Closer analysis of patterns of TV narrative across TV's history and across genres may well show that the endless deferral of TV seriality actually extends the young unruly woman's characteristic hesitation before her "acceptance of our culture's ideology of heterosexuality" even more than film narrative does (130). Such analysis would also raise the issue of women's stories beyond those of heterosexual romance and its familial aftermath, in that TV since the 70s has placed female characters in public positions "over" men in professional settings, and/or in exclusively female partnerships at work and at home. Not only the types of stories but the kinds of star images and acting styles used in the creation of unruly TV women deserve further

interrogation. For instance, Rowe claims in passing that "Laverne and Shirley" and Norman Lear's sitcoms all "teach . . . adjustment to prevailing institutions," while "Roseanne" "subvert[s] and discredit[s] those institutions" (77). This blanket assumption, however, seems too hasty, in that both the angry 70s feminist Maude (the tall, gray-haired, deep-voiced Bea Arthur) and the roommate buddies (the athletic, somewhat boyish Penny Marshall and Cindy Williams) fit the physical bill for unruliness so well.

That *The Unruly Woman* raises as many questions as it answers is an indication of the fertile and underutilized territories Rowe has opened up for feminist investigations of film and TV. Her book is a clearly written, knowledgeable synthesis of a huge range of fascinating and highly meaningful texts. Areas left unexplored in its argumentation should call forth further studies along the several challenging paths Rowe originates but does not exhaust.

SUSAN KNOBLOCH

■ Susan Knobloch is a Ph.D. candidate in Film/Television Critical Studies at UCLA.

Whom God Wishes to Destroy . . .

Francis Coppola and the New Hollywood

By Jon Lewis. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1995. $23.95.

In 1980, Francis Coppola created his Zoetrope Studios, which he hoped would nurture innovative film artists and provide a sound economic base from which he could pursue a grandly ambitious program of film-making. Several years later the studio was bankrupt, and Coppola's career went into a prolonged commercial and critical decline. His lavish ambition to transgress the boundaries of conventional studio filmmaking, his need for huge sums of money to finance the most unorthodox projects, and his unyielding commitment to the idea of the director as auteur kept him desperately out of synch with the prevailing industry climate during the 1980s, when the big box-office winners were films that seemed designed by committee and stayed within traditional generic formulas.

Jon Lewis examines Coppola's checkered career during this period, beginning with a profile of the rise and fall of Zoetrope Studios and then discussing the production of Coppola's subsequent films up through *Bram Stoker's Dracula*. Given the large number of films on which Coppola worked as director and/or producer, Lewis, in this slim volume, can provide only a brief discussion for most of them. The complex and troubled productions of *One from the Heart* and *The Cotton Club*, however, are treated in substantive, lengthy chapters.

One from the Heart, on which Coppola began to experiment with electronic methods of previsualizing and directing a motion picture, represented the triumph of production design over narrative. The director forged ahead with his state-of-the-art electronic production methods, yet remained confused and unclear over just what this film should be about. The film's conceptual fuzziness stood in stark contrast to the hard, lucid brilliance of his earlier *The Conversation* (1974). Although Lewis finds *One from the Heart* to be an outstanding film precisely because of Coppola's confusions and "inability to scale things down," the damage it wrought to the director's career, studio, and reputation was severe and long-lasting.

The power struggle between director Coppola, producer Robert Evans, and Orion Pictures during the making of *The Cotton Club* assumed Byzantine proportions and makes for fascinating reading (if not for a coherent film). As with *One from the Heart*, though, Coppola displayed a dangerous predilection for thriving on chaos and confusion. And as many of his pictures from this period demonstrate, the result is often a compromised final product.

Lewis is a sympathetic chronicler of Coppola's woes during the decade. He sums up Coppola's Zoetrope period by judging it "five years of terrific movie making and truly disastrous luck in dealing with the major studios." Lewis finds Coppola to be "a far more important and far better film-maker than businessman," and the book's drama inheres in the radical disalignment between Coppola's artistic goals and the available economic routes for reaching them.

In pursuing this question, however, Lewis might have examined more critically the issue of whether film artistry need carry as high a price tag as Coppola's grander projects did. Coppola, after all, chose to hitch his star to several megabuck productions, to invest his reputation in spectacle, and to aggressively promote that spectacle as the new vision of what cinema art should be.

Lewis briefly acknowledges the treacherous artistic, financial, and personal cost that a commitment to spectacle might entail. Writing about the production controversies surrounding the troubled *Apocalypse Now* and *Heaven's Gate* (directed by Michael Cimino), Lewis admits that "the filmmakers themselves were at least partly to blame. They had so upped the stakes and the

interrogation. For instance, Rowe claims in passing that "Laverne and Shirley" and Norman Lear's sitcoms all "teach . . . adjustment to prevailing institutions," while "Roseanne" "subvert[s] and discredit[s] those institutions" (77). This blanket assumption, however, seems too hasty, in that both the angry 70s feminist Maude (the tall, gray-haired, deep-voiced Bea Arthur) and the roommate buddies (the athletic, somewhat boyish Penny Marshall and Cindy Williams) fit the physical bill for unruliness so well.

That *The Unruly Woman* raises as many questions as it answers is an indication of the fertile and underutilized territories Rowe has opened up for feminist investigations of film and TV. Her book is a clearly written, knowledgeable synthesis of a huge range of fascinating and highly meaningful texts. Areas left unexplored in its argumentation should call forth further studies along the several challenging paths Rowe originates but does not exhaust.

SUSAN KNOBLOCH

■ Susan Knobloch is a Ph.D. candidate in Film/Television Critical Studies at UCLA.

Whom God Wishes to Destroy . . .

Francis Coppola and the New Hollywood

By Jon Lewis. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1995. $23.95.

In 1980, Francis Coppola created his Zoetrope Studios, which he hoped would nurture innovative film artists and provide a sound economic base from which he could pursue a grandly ambitious program of film-making. Several years later the studio was bankrupt, and Coppola's career went into a prolonged commercial and critical decline. His lavish ambition to transgress the boundaries of conventional studio filmmaking, his need for huge sums of money to finance the most unorthodox projects, and his unyielding commitment to the idea of the director as auteur kept him desperately out of synch with the prevailing industry climate during the 1980s, when the big box-office winners were films that seemed designed by committee and stayed within traditional generic formulas.

Jon Lewis examines Coppola's checkered career during this period, beginning with a profile of the rise and fall of Zoetrope Studios and then discussing the production of Coppola's subsequent films up through *Bram Stoker's Dracula*. Given the large number of films on which Coppola worked as director and/or producer, Lewis, in this slim volume, can provide only a brief discussion for most of them. The complex and troubled productions of *One from the Heart* and *The Cotton Club*, however, are treated in substantive, lengthy chapters.

One from the Heart, on which Coppola began to experiment with electronic methods of previsualizing and directing a motion picture, represented the triumph of production design over narrative. The director forged ahead with his state-of-the-art electronic production methods, yet remained confused and unclear over just what this film should be about. The film's conceptual fuzziness stood in stark contrast to the hard, lucid brilliance of his earlier *The Conversation* (1974). Although Lewis finds *One from the Heart* to be an outstanding film precisely because of Coppola's confusions and "inability to scale things down," the damage it wrought to the director's career, studio, and reputation was severe and long-lasting.

The power struggle between director Coppola, producer Robert Evans, and Orion Pictures during the making of *The Cotton Club* assumed Byzantine proportions and makes for fascinating reading (if not for a coherent film). As with *One from the Heart*, though, Coppola displayed a dangerous predilection for thriving on chaos and confusion. And as many of his pictures from this period demonstrate, the result is often a compromised final product.

Lewis is a sympathetic chronicler of Coppola's woes during the decade. He sums up Coppola's Zoetrope period by judging it "five years of terrific movie making and truly disastrous luck in dealing with the major studios." Lewis finds Coppola to be "a far more important and far better film-maker than businessman," and the book's drama inheres in the radical disalignment between Coppola's artistic goals and the available economic routes for reaching them.

In pursuing this question, however, Lewis might have examined more critically the issue of whether film artistry need carry as high a price tag as Coppola's grander projects did. Coppola, after all, chose to hitch his star to several megabuck productions, to invest his reputation in spectacle, and to aggressively promote that spectacle as the new vision of what cinema art should be.

Lewis briefly acknowledges the treacherous artistic, financial, and personal cost that a commitment to spectacle might entail. Writing about the production controversies surrounding the troubled *Apocalypse Now* and *Heaven's Gate* (directed by Michael Cimino), Lewis admits that "the filmmakers themselves were at least partly to blame. They had so upped the stakes and the

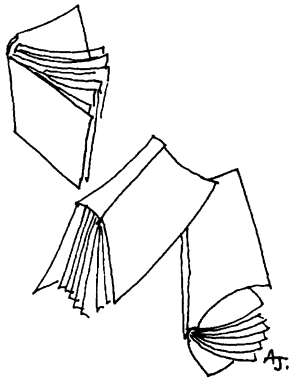
costs—they had so focused on making big movies—that they had, in effect, collectively risked their status on each and every prestige auteurist package."

Coppola's grandiose visions were often ill-suited to the corporate climate of 1980s Hollywood, yet the high-stakes drama of his struggles with the studios may deflect attention from the important lesson that emerges from this saga: the wisdom of sustaining a career with inexpensive, small-scale film-making. Woody Allen and Sidney Lumet have established flourishing careers by following this principle, and Robert Altman and Martin Scorsese maintained programs of inexpensive but innovative film-making during the 1980s (and in the face of the same studio intransigence that Coppola encountered, but without the fireworks and perpetual aura of Götterdämmerung that hung over him). While Coppola is undeniably a major figure, his ill-fated efforts during the 80s argue forcefully for the counterexamples represented by these other film-makers. Lewis might have been more critical on this point and less committed to Coppola's maverick, and economically wasteful, style.

Lewis's account is not an auteurist study of the films, but a production history that places Coppola's work against the industry realignments and marketing policies of the 1980s. Its brevity is an asset because it provides a compact overview of the circuitous course of the director's recent work. Coppola's highly dramatic career makes for absorbing reading. If Lewis's sympathies for the man prevent him from asking some hard questions about the director's work, he has at least provided a topical and valuable chronicle of this tempestuous film-maker's tribulations in the diversified corporate setting of modern Hollywood.

STEPHEN PRINCE

■ Stephen Prince is the Book Review Editor of *Film Quarterly*.



Book Notes

Contributors to Book Notes:

William Johnson is the New York Editor of *FQ*; Charles Musser teaches at Yale University; Stephen Prince is the Book Review Editor of *FQ*; Tony Williams teaches at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale.

Bansak, Edward G. *Fearing the Dark: The Val Lewton Career*. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 1995. $45.00. *Fearing the Dark* is a weighty and ambitious book. It aims not only to establish claims for the influence of Val Lewton's creative vision on RKO horror films of the 1940s, but also for his creative interaction with particular cinematic tendencies within both his own era and the present day. It is a lofty thesis documented with references to Lewton's life, his known and forgotten films, and with information about the producer's own contemporaries such as Jacques Tourneur, Robert Wise, and Mark Robson. Unfortunately, apart from the already established conclusions concerning Lewton's influence on his RKO unit supplied by Joel Siegel, J. P. Telotte, and others, claims for Lewton as the great unsung influence on Hollywood cinema are strained, and rest upon too many assertions and unsubstantiated claims.

Bansak acknowledges Lewton's indebtedness to the horror films of the day, many of which he screened before beginning his production work. He notes the contemporary influence of Orson Welles in both theater and cinema as possible sources for many RKO productions, but cites no firm evidence. Indeed, Bansak often relies upon guesswork and assertion, and many of his claims remain dubious and unsubstantiated. Despite his meticulous work on the index, Bansak never provides the necessary footnote citations to allow further investigation of his claims.

A Lewton influence is claimed for virtually every film noir and horror movie produced since the 40s. In fact, Bansak leaves no major film unfree from Lewton, citing such diverse examples as *Sunset Boulevard* (1950), *Ace in the Hole* (1951), *Rosemary's Baby* (1968), *Halloween* (1978), *Dead Again* (1991), and *Silence of the Lambs* (1991). Many of the techniques Bansak cites, however, are better understood as part of the common contemporary cinematic currency, and are not derived from Lewton. This is hagiography, not carefully supported film history.

Despite these failings—and the many errors and misspellings in the text—the book is still valuable for its material concerning Lewton's early career, his forgotten

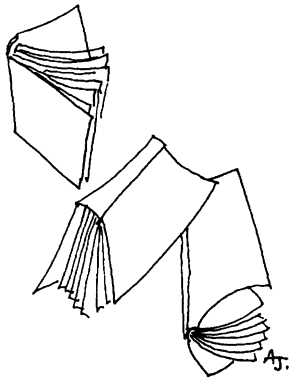
costs—they had so focused on making big movies—that they had, in effect, collectively risked their status on each and every prestige auteurist package."

Coppola's grandiose visions were often ill-suited to the corporate climate of 1980s Hollywood, yet the high-stakes drama of his struggles with the studios may deflect attention from the important lesson that emerges from this saga: the wisdom of sustaining a career with inexpensive, small-scale film-making. Woody Allen and Sidney Lumet have established flourishing careers by following this principle, and Robert Altman and Martin Scorsese maintained programs of inexpensive but innovative film-making during the 1980s (and in the face of the same studio intransigence that Coppola encountered, but without the fireworks and perpetual aura of Götterdämmerung that hung over him). While Coppola is undeniably a major figure, his ill-fated efforts during the 80s argue forcefully for the counterexamples represented by these other film-makers. Lewis might have been more critical on this point and less committed to Coppola's maverick, and economically wasteful, style.

Lewis's account is not an auteurist study of the films, but a production history that places Coppola's work against the industry realignments and marketing policies of the 1980s. Its brevity is an asset because it provides a compact overview of the circuitous course of the director's recent work. Coppola's highly dramatic career makes for absorbing reading. If Lewis's sympathies for the man prevent him from asking some hard questions about the director's work, he has at least provided a topical and valuable chronicle of this tempestuous film-maker's tribulations in the diversified corporate setting of modern Hollywood.

STEPHEN PRINCE

■ Stephen Prince is the Book Review Editor of *Film Quarterly*.



Book Notes

Contributors to Book Notes:

William Johnson is the New York Editor of *FQ*; Charles Musser teaches at Yale University; Stephen Prince is the Book Review Editor of *FQ*; Tony Williams teaches at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale.

Bansak, Edward G. *Fearing the Dark: The Val Lewton Career*. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 1995. $45.00. *Fearing the Dark* is a weighty and ambitious book. It aims not only to establish claims for the influence of Val Lewton's creative vision on RKO horror films of the 1940s, but also for his creative interaction with particular cinematic tendencies within both his own era and the present day. It is a lofty thesis documented with references to Lewton's life, his known and forgotten films, and with information about the producer's own contemporaries such as Jacques Tourneur, Robert Wise, and Mark Robson. Unfortunately, apart from the already established conclusions concerning Lewton's influence on his RKO unit supplied by Joel Siegel, J. P. Telotte, and others, claims for Lewton as the great unsung influence on Hollywood cinema are strained, and rest upon too many assertions and unsubstantiated claims.

Bansak acknowledges Lewton's indebtedness to the horror films of the day, many of which he screened before beginning his production work. He notes the contemporary influence of Orson Welles in both theater and cinema as possible sources for many RKO productions, but cites no firm evidence. Indeed, Bansak often relies upon guesswork and assertion, and many of his claims remain dubious and unsubstantiated. Despite his meticulous work on the index, Bansak never provides the necessary footnote citations to allow further investigation of his claims.

A Lewton influence is claimed for virtually every film noir and horror movie produced since the 40s. In fact, Bansak leaves no major film unfree from Lewton, citing such diverse examples as *Sunset Boulevard* (1950), *Ace in the Hole* (1951), *Rosemary's Baby* (1968), *Halloween* (1978), *Dead Again* (1991), and *Silence of the Lambs* (1991). Many of the techniques Bansak cites, however, are better understood as part of the common contemporary cinematic currency, and are not derived from Lewton. This is hagiography, not carefully supported film history.

Despite these failings—and the many errors and misspellings in the text—the book is still valuable for its material concerning Lewton's early career, his forgotten

pulp fiction, his definite influence on later suspense genre explorations, and detailed documentation of a vast number of movies in danger of being forgotten.

TONY WILLIAMS

Bliss, Michael, and Christina Banks. *What Goes Around Comes Around: The Films of Jonathan Demme.* Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1996. $24.95 cloth; $14.95 paper. Jonathan Demme holds an unusual position in American cinema: nurtured in exploitation, he went on to embrace both popular big-budget movies (such as his Oscar-winning *The Silence of the Lambs*) and offbeat independent movies (such as *Cousin Bobby*, about a radical white minister in Harlem). At the same time, as Bliss and Banks emphasize, Demme is known for his left-of-center politics: he "made it clear even in his earliest films that his sympathies were with the poor and disadvantaged, that he was concerned with people of color and Third World countries" (1).

The study takes a primarily thematic approach to Demme's films. An introductory overview of his career is followed by a critical analysis of each film he directed, in chronological order from *Caged Heat* through *Philadelphia*. There are also interviews with Demme and Craig McKay, his regular film editor, as well as a filmography.

The title of the book comes from a line of dialogue that appears, with slightly different wording, in both *Something Wild* and *Married to the Mob*. For Bliss and Banks, the line summarizes a recurring trajectory of Demme's films, in which "characters' actions determine what subsequently happens to them, if not in a causal then certainly in a karmic way. There is a structural analogue to this belief; it can be referred to as the Demme ellipsis" (13). By this they mean that in some of Demme's films characters begin and end in the same place, like Charlie and Audrey at the café in *Something Wild*.

The fact that characters' actions also determine what happens to them in the works of many other film-makers does not invalidate its application to Demme, but it does point to the narrow focus that Bliss and Banks chose for their study. References to other films and film-makers are brief and superficial; no specifics are given of the difference between Demme's attempt to imitate Hitchcock in *Last Embrace* and his assimilation of the Hitchcockian spirit in *The Silence of the Lambs*. There is no mention of Michael Mann's *Manhunter* and its possible influence on different approaches in *Silence*, even though Demme rewatched part of Mann's film while preparing his own.

Another omission is less justifiable. Although Demme wrote the scripts of only two of his early films and admits that he is not a good writer, Bliss and Banks include no more than a few passing references to his relations with screenwriters. While presenting Demme as an auteur, they do not explain how—whether in collaboration with or in spite of his writers (who differed from film to film)—he has achieved his recurrent themes and structures. The omission is most glaring in the discussion of *The Silence of the Lambs*, where Bliss and Banks note that Ted Tally had already written the script for Gene Hackman to direct, and also conclude that the film does not show Demme's qualities to best advantage.

What the book does offer is a detailed and generally thoughtful appraisal of Demme's films. No doubt readers will disagree, as I did, with some of the conclusions, but it would be a bland study that drew only approving nods. Within its chosen limits, *What Goes Around Comes Around* is both informative and challenging in its reading of Demme's work.

WILLIAM JOHNSON

Davis, Ronald L. *John Ford: Hollywood's Old Master.* Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995. $29.95. Besides being the finest director of Westerns, John Ford was one of the great screen poets, but he was resolutely unpretentious about his work. His films are highly stylized (witness his use of red filters and panchromatic stock to capture the amazing skies of *Fort Apache*), yet closely focused on the nuances of character. Ford disdained directors who were in love with their camera. For him, the secret to cinema lay not in the camera, but "in people's faces, their eye expression, their movements."

Ronald L. Davis's biography of Ford stresses the complexity of Ford's personality and the way in which his Irish-Catholic background and inner turmoil affected his approach to film-making. The book is a brisk read, and, even at more than 300 pages, it feels a bit sketchy. Part of the problem is that the discussion takes on an "and then he made" quality that is not helped by a generally cursory and unremarkable discussion of the films. Davis describes Ford's overall cinematic style, but does not scrutinize its application in much detail in any of the films.

The book is probably suited for the general reader who wants a compact introduction to Ford's life. Davis's volume is well researched, but readers will wish to continue consulting the established accounts of Ford by Lindsay Anderson, Tag Gallagher, and Peter Bogdanovich.

STEPHEN PRINCE

Koga, Futoshi, ed. *Lumière! Les Frères Lumière et le Japon 1895–1995.* Tokyo: Asahi Shimbun, 1995. $35.00. The centennial of cinema has generated a rich assortment of books on the early years of motion pic-

pulp fiction, his definite influence on later suspense genre explorations, and detailed documentation of a vast number of movies in danger of being forgotten.

TONY WILLIAMS

Bliss, Michael, and Christina Banks. *What Goes Around Comes Around: The Films of Jonathan Demme.* Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1996. $24.95 cloth; $14.95 paper. Jonathan Demme holds an unusual position in American cinema: nurtured in exploitation, he went on to embrace both popular big-budget movies (such as his Oscar-winning *The Silence of the Lambs*) and offbeat independent movies (such as *Cousin Bobby*, about a radical white minister in Harlem). At the same time, as Bliss and Banks emphasize, Demme is known for his left-of-center politics: he "made it clear even in his earliest films that his sympathies were with the poor and disadvantaged, that he was concerned with people of color and Third World countries" (1).

The study takes a primarily thematic approach to Demme's films. An introductory overview of his career is followed by a critical analysis of each film he directed, in chronological order from *Caged Heat* through *Philadelphia*. There are also interviews with Demme and Craig McKay, his regular film editor, as well as a filmography.

The title of the book comes from a line of dialogue that appears, with slightly different wording, in both *Something Wild* and *Married to the Mob*. For Bliss and Banks, the line summarizes a recurring trajectory of Demme's films, in which "characters' actions determine what subsequently happens to them, if not in a causal then certainly in a karmic way. There is a structural analogue to this belief; it can be referred to as the Demme ellipsis" (13). By this they mean that in some of Demme's films characters begin and end in the same place, like Charlie and Audrey at the café in *Something Wild*.

The fact that characters' actions also determine what happens to them in the works of many other film-makers does not invalidate its application to Demme, but it does point to the narrow focus that Bliss and Banks chose for their study. References to other films and film-makers are brief and superficial; no specifics are given of the difference between Demme's attempt to imitate Hitchcock in *Last Embrace* and his assimilation of the Hitchcockian spirit in *The Silence of the Lambs*. There is no mention of Michael Mann's *Manhunter* and its possible influence on different approaches in *Silence*, even though Demme rewatched part of Mann's film while preparing his own.

Another omission is less justifiable. Although Demme wrote the scripts of only two of his early films and admits that he is not a good writer, Bliss and Banks include no more than a few passing references to his relations with screenwriters. While presenting Demme as an auteur, they do not explain how—whether in collaboration with or in spite of his writers (who differed from film to film)—he has achieved his recurrent themes and structures. The omission is most glaring in the discussion of *The Silence of the Lambs*, where Bliss and Banks note that Ted Tally had already written the script for Gene Hackman to direct, and also conclude that the film does not show Demme's qualities to best advantage.

What the book does offer is a detailed and generally thoughtful appraisal of Demme's films. No doubt readers will disagree, as I did, with some of the conclusions, but it would be a bland study that drew only approving nods. Within its chosen limits, *What Goes Around Comes Around* is both informative and challenging in its reading of Demme's work.

WILLIAM JOHNSON

Davis, Ronald L. *John Ford: Hollywood's Old Master.* Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995. $29.95. Besides being the finest director of Westerns, John Ford was one of the great screen poets, but he was resolutely unpretentious about his work. His films are highly stylized (witness his use of red filters and panchromatic stock to capture the amazing skies of *Fort Apache*), yet closely focused on the nuances of character. Ford disdained directors who were in love with their camera. For him, the secret to cinema lay not in the camera, but "in people's faces, their eye expression, their movements."

Ronald L. Davis's biography of Ford stresses the complexity of Ford's personality and the way in which his Irish-Catholic background and inner turmoil affected his approach to film-making. The book is a brisk read, and, even at more than 300 pages, it feels a bit sketchy. Part of the problem is that the discussion takes on an "and then he made" quality that is not helped by a generally cursory and unremarkable discussion of the films. Davis describes Ford's overall cinematic style, but does not scrutinize its application in much detail in any of the films.

The book is probably suited for the general reader who wants a compact introduction to Ford's life. Davis's volume is well researched, but readers will wish to continue consulting the established accounts of Ford by Lindsay Anderson, Tag Gallagher, and Peter Bogdanovich.

STEPHEN PRINCE

Koga, Futoshi, ed. *Lumière! Les Frères Lumière et le Japon 1895–1995.* Tokyo: Asahi Shimbun, 1995. $35.00. The centennial of cinema has generated a rich assortment of books on the early years of motion pic-

pulp fiction, his definite influence on later suspense genre explorations, and detailed documentation of a vast number of movies in danger of being forgotten.

TONY WILLIAMS

Bliss, Michael, and Christina Banks. *What Goes Around Comes Around: The Films of Jonathan Demme.* Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1996. $24.95 cloth; $14.95 paper. Jonathan Demme holds an unusual position in American cinema: nurtured in exploitation, he went on to embrace both popular big-budget movies (such as his Oscar-winning *The Silence of the Lambs*) and offbeat independent movies (such as *Cousin Bobby*, about a radical white minister in Harlem). At the same time, as Bliss and Banks emphasize, Demme is known for his left-of-center politics: he "made it clear even in his earliest films that his sympathies were with the poor and disadvantaged, that he was concerned with people of color and Third World countries" (1).

The study takes a primarily thematic approach to Demme's films. An introductory overview of his career is followed by a critical analysis of each film he directed, in chronological order from *Caged Heat* through *Philadelphia*. There are also interviews with Demme and Craig McKay, his regular film editor, as well as a filmography.

The title of the book comes from a line of dialogue that appears, with slightly different wording, in both *Something Wild* and *Married to the Mob*. For Bliss and Banks, the line summarizes a recurring trajectory of Demme's films, in which "characters' actions determine what subsequently happens to them, if not in a causal then certainly in a karmic way. There is a structural analogue to this belief; it can be referred to as the Demme ellipsis" (13). By this they mean that in some of Demme's films characters begin and end in the same place, like Charlie and Audrey at the café in *Something Wild*.

The fact that characters' actions also determine what happens to them in the works of many other film-makers does not invalidate its application to Demme, but it does point to the narrow focus that Bliss and Banks chose for their study. References to other films and film-makers are brief and superficial; no specifics are given of the difference between Demme's attempt to imitate Hitchcock in *Last Embrace* and his assimilation of the Hitchcockian spirit in *The Silence of the Lambs*. There is no mention of Michael Mann's *Manhunter* and its possible influence on different approaches in *Silence*, even though Demme rewatched part of Mann's film while preparing his own.

Another omission is less justifiable. Although Demme wrote the scripts of only two of his early films and admits that he is not a good writer, Bliss and Banks include no more than a few passing references to his relations with screenwriters. While presenting Demme as an auteur, they do not explain how—whether in collaboration with or in spite of his writers (who differed from film to film)—he has achieved his recurrent themes and structures. The omission is most glaring in the discussion of *The Silence of the Lambs*, where Bliss and Banks note that Ted Tally had already written the script for Gene Hackman to direct, and also conclude that the film does not show Demme's qualities to best advantage.

What the book does offer is a detailed and generally thoughtful appraisal of Demme's films. No doubt readers will disagree, as I did, with some of the conclusions, but it would be a bland study that drew only approving nods. Within its chosen limits, *What Goes Around Comes Around* is both informative and challenging in its reading of Demme's work.

WILLIAM JOHNSON

Davis, Ronald L. *John Ford: Hollywood's Old Master.* Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995. $29.95. Besides being the finest director of Westerns, John Ford was one of the great screen poets, but he was resolutely unpretentious about his work. His films are highly stylized (witness his use of red filters and panchromatic stock to capture the amazing skies of *Fort Apache*), yet closely focused on the nuances of character. Ford disdained directors who were in love with their camera. For him, the secret to cinema lay not in the camera, but "in people's faces, their eye expression, their movements."

Ronald L. Davis's biography of Ford stresses the complexity of Ford's personality and the way in which his Irish-Catholic background and inner turmoil affected his approach to film-making. The book is a brisk read, and, even at more than 300 pages, it feels a bit sketchy. Part of the problem is that the discussion takes on an "and then he made" quality that is not helped by a generally cursory and unremarkable discussion of the films. Davis describes Ford's overall cinematic style, but does not scrutinize its application in much detail in any of the films.

The book is probably suited for the general reader who wants a compact introduction to Ford's life. Davis's volume is well researched, but readers will wish to continue consulting the established accounts of Ford by Lindsay Anderson, Tag Gallagher, and Peter Bogdanovich.

STEPHEN PRINCE

Koga, Futoshi, ed. *Lumière! Les Frères Lumière et le Japon 1895–1995.* Tokyo: Asahi Shimbun, 1995. $35.00. The centennial of cinema has generated a rich assortment of books on the early years of motion pic-

pulp fiction, his definite influence on later suspense genre explorations, and detailed documentation of a vast number of movies in danger of being forgotten.

TONY WILLIAMS

Bliss, Michael, and Christina Banks. *What Goes Around Comes Around: The Films of Jonathan Demme.* Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1996. $24.95 cloth; $14.95 paper. Jonathan Demme holds an unusual position in American cinema: nurtured in exploitation, he went on to embrace both popular big-budget movies (such as his Oscar-winning *The Silence of the Lambs*) and offbeat independent movies (such as *Cousin Bobby*, about a radical white minister in Harlem). At the same time, as Bliss and Banks emphasize, Demme is known for his left-of-center politics: he "made it clear even in his earliest films that his sympathies were with the poor and disadvantaged, that he was concerned with people of color and Third World countries" (1).

The study takes a primarily thematic approach to Demme's films. An introductory overview of his career is followed by a critical analysis of each film he directed, in chronological order from *Caged Heat* through *Philadelphia*. There are also interviews with Demme and Craig McKay, his regular film editor, as well as a filmography.

The title of the book comes from a line of dialogue that appears, with slightly different wording, in both *Something Wild* and *Married to the Mob*. For Bliss and Banks, the line summarizes a recurring trajectory of Demme's films, in which "characters' actions determine what subsequently happens to them, if not in a causal then certainly in a karmic way. There is a structural analogue to this belief; it can be referred to as the Demme ellipsis" (13). By this they mean that in some of Demme's films characters begin and end in the same place, like Charlie and Audrey at the café in *Something Wild*.

The fact that characters' actions also determine what happens to them in the works of many other film-makers does not invalidate its application to Demme, but it does point to the narrow focus that Bliss and Banks chose for their study. References to other films and film-makers are brief and superficial; no specifics are given of the difference between Demme's attempt to imitate Hitchcock in *Last Embrace* and his assimilation of the Hitchcockian spirit in *The Silence of the Lambs*. There is no mention of Michael Mann's *Manhunter* and its possible influence on different approaches in *Silence*, even though Demme rewatched part of Mann's film while preparing his own.

Another omission is less justifiable. Although Demme wrote the scripts of only two of his early films and admits that he is not a good writer, Bliss and Banks include no more than a few passing references to his relations with screenwriters. While presenting Demme as an auteur, they do not explain how—whether in collaboration with or in spite of his writers (who differed from film to film)—he has achieved his recurrent themes and structures. The omission is most glaring in the discussion of *The Silence of the Lambs*, where Bliss and Banks note that Ted Tally had already written the script for Gene Hackman to direct, and also conclude that the film does not show Demme's qualities to best advantage.

What the book does offer is a detailed and generally thoughtful appraisal of Demme's films. No doubt readers will disagree, as I did, with some of the conclusions, but it would be a bland study that drew only approving nods. Within its chosen limits, *What Goes Around Comes Around* is both informative and challenging in its reading of Demme's work.

WILLIAM JOHNSON

Davis, Ronald L. *John Ford: Hollywood's Old Master.* Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995. $29.95. Besides being the finest director of Westerns, John Ford was one of the great screen poets, but he was resolutely unpretentious about his work. His films are highly stylized (witness his use of red filters and panchromatic stock to capture the amazing skies of *Fort Apache*), yet closely focused on the nuances of character. Ford disdained directors who were in love with their camera. For him, the secret to cinema lay not in the camera, but "in people's faces, their eye expression, their movements."

Ronald L. Davis's biography of Ford stresses the complexity of Ford's personality and the way in which his Irish-Catholic background and inner turmoil affected his approach to film-making. The book is a brisk read, and, even at more than 300 pages, it feels a bit sketchy. Part of the problem is that the discussion takes on an "and then he made" quality that is not helped by a generally cursory and unremarkable discussion of the films. Davis describes Ford's overall cinematic style, but does not scrutinize its application in much detail in any of the films.

The book is probably suited for the general reader who wants a compact introduction to Ford's life. Davis's volume is well researched, but readers will wish to continue consulting the established accounts of Ford by Lindsay Anderson, Tag Gallagher, and Peter Bogdanovich.

STEPHEN PRINCE

Koga, Futoshi, ed. *Lumière! Les Frères Lumière et le Japon 1895–1995.* Tokyo: Asahi Shimbun, 1995. $35.00. The centennial of cinema has generated a rich assortment of books on the early years of motion pic-

tures. Numerous works, including this catalog focusing on Lumière-related activities in Japan, have been subsidized by a French government eager to underscore its national contribution. At least in the instance of *Lumière! Les Frères Lumière et le Japon 1895–1995*, the result has been a significant addition to our historical knowledge of these earliest years of the cinema. This exhibition catalog features a number of comparatively brief articles (by Shigehiko Hasumi, Hiroshi Komatsu, and Futoshi Koga, as well as several French contributors) that present an array of valuable, previously unavailable information in an elegant format. They are accompanied by a filmography, including frame enlargements and production information, of Lumière films shot in Japan between January 1897 and March 1899. Relevant photographs are generously and effectively dispersed throughout. The text is in both Japanese and French, with the book delicately balanced between addressing a Japanese audience lacking much familiarity with the French production company and an international one eager to learn more about the Japanese context.

Film historians are gradually acquiring a keener sense of the commercial mechanisms employed by the Lumières to market their motion picture system, in particular their reliance on *concessionaires* familiar with the selected territory to be exploited. Now Koga has assembled a noteworthy book detailing the film activities unfolding around the Japanese concessionaire Katsutaro Inabata. Inabata, the director of a dye company, had studied abroad in Lyons, where he had come to know the Lumières. Despite this long-standing acquaintance, the Lumières did not hesitate to extract extremely favorable terms for the concession, guaranteeing themselves 60 percent of the gross receipts (higher than that demanded of Inabata's European counterparts).

Although this useful, carefully crafted, and reliable book unfortunately lacks footnotes, it otherwise seems a perfect achievement. It can be purchased for $35 (3,000¥) directly from Asahi Shimbun, one of the largest newspaper publishers in Japan. (Write: Futoshi Koga, Asahi Shimbun, Cultural Projects Division, 5-3-2 Tsukiji, Chou-ku, Tokyo 104-11, Japan.)

CHARLES MUSSER

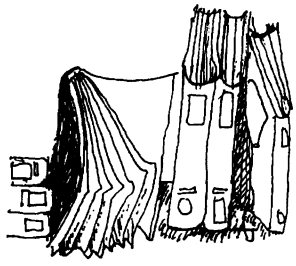
Lumet, Sidney. *Making Movies.* New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995. $22.50 cloth; $12.00 paper. In this unique, engrossing book, Sidney Lumet, one of American cinema's most intelligent and prolific film-makers, explores the film director's job with step-by-step discussions of his own work as he progresses from scripting, casting, and rehearsals to shooting, editing, mixing sound, and nervously attending the opening-night premiere. Lumet aims to show movie making for the hard work that it is and to cut through auteurist nonsense about how production decisions are made. Lumet approvingly recounts Kurosawa's reply to his question about why a particular shot in *Ran* was framed as it was: an auteur critic would say that the shot was framed for its artistic effect; Kurosawa pointed out that any other framing would have revealed the Sony factory and airport nearby.

Lumet places film-making in the kind of pragmatic, real-world context that Kurosawa acknowledged in this answer, and he insists that it is by grappling with these challenges that a film-maker may achieve something of lasting value on screen. Lumet also insists that film is an art and that the director's interpretation of the material be committed and clear so that an artistic point of view emerges, but he stresses the limits to a director's creative control. "But how much in charge am I? *Is* the movie *un film de Sidney Lumet*? . . . I'm dependent on the talents and idiosyncrasies, the moods and egos, the politics and personalities, of more than a hundred different people. And that's just in the making of a movie. At this point I won't begin to discuss the studio, financing, distribution, marketing, and so on."

Lumet wants the reader to be aware of all the petty and pragmatic circumstances that dictate how films are made, but he also shows how a director works artistically and can achieve a unifying, and meaningful, visual style for a production. In his work, Lumet has systematically varied the focal length of lenses, the positioning and hardness of light, and the intensity and hue of color filters. All of these options are profiled with examples from his films.

Making Movies is an excellent, behind-the-scenes primer on how films are made, where the artistry enters the picture, and, as Lumet says, why "most pictures aren't very good." This is a gritty, efficient, intelligent, and unpretentious look at directing—exactly the qualities that make Lumet's films so memorable.

S. P.



tures. Numerous works, including this catalog focusing on Lumière-related activities in Japan, have been subsidized by a French government eager to underscore its national contribution. At least in the instance of *Lumière! Les Frères Lumière et le Japon 1895–1995*, the result has been a significant addition to our historical knowledge of these earliest years of the cinema. This exhibition catalog features a number of comparatively brief articles (by Shigehiko Hasumi, Hiroshi Komatsu, and Futoshi Koga, as well as several French contributors) that present an array of valuable, previously unavailable information in an elegant format. They are accompanied by a filmography, including frame enlargements and production information, of Lumière films shot in Japan between January 1897 and March 1899. Relevant photographs are generously and effectively dispersed throughout. The text is in both Japanese and French, with the book delicately balanced between addressing a Japanese audience lacking much familiarity with the French production company and an international one eager to learn more about the Japanese context.

Film historians are gradually acquiring a keener sense of the commercial mechanisms employed by the Lumières to market their motion picture system, in particular their reliance on *concessionaires* familiar with the selected territory to be exploited. Now Koga has assembled a noteworthy book detailing the film activities unfolding around the Japanese concessionaire Katsutaro Inabata. Inabata, the director of a dye company, had studied abroad in Lyons, where he had come to know the Lumières. Despite this long-standing acquaintance, the Lumières did not hesitate to extract extremely favorable terms for the concession, guaranteeing themselves 60 percent of the gross receipts (higher than that demanded of Inabata's European counterparts).

Although this useful, carefully crafted, and reliable book unfortunately lacks footnotes, it otherwise seems a perfect achievement. It can be purchased for $35 (3,000¥) directly from Asahi Shimbun, one of the largest newspaper publishers in Japan. (Write: Futoshi Koga, Asahi Shimbun, Cultural Projects Division, 5-3-2 Tsukiji, Chou-ku, Tokyo 104-11, Japan.)

CHARLES MUSSER

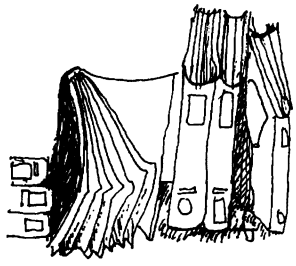
Lumet, Sidney. *Making Movies.* New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995. $22.50 cloth; $12.00 paper. In this unique, engrossing book, Sidney Lumet, one of American cinema's most intelligent and prolific film-makers, explores the film director's job with step-by-step discussions of his own work as he progresses from scripting, casting, and rehearsals to shooting, editing, mixing sound, and nervously attending the opening-night premiere. Lumet aims to show movie making for the hard work that it is and to cut through auteurist nonsense about how production decisions are made. Lumet approvingly recounts Kurosawa's reply to his question about why a particular shot in *Ran* was framed as it was: an auteur critic would say that the shot was framed for its artistic effect; Kurosawa pointed out that any other framing would have revealed the Sony factory and airport nearby.

Lumet places film-making in the kind of pragmatic, real-world context that Kurosawa acknowledged in this answer, and he insists that it is by grappling with these challenges that a film-maker may achieve something of lasting value on screen. Lumet also insists that film is an art and that the director's interpretation of the material be committed and clear so that an artistic point of view emerges, but he stresses the limits to a director's creative control. "But how much in charge am I? *Is* the movie *un film de Sidney Lumet*? . . . I'm dependent on the talents and idiosyncrasies, the moods and egos, the politics and personalities, of more than a hundred different people. And that's just in the making of a movie. At this point I won't begin to discuss the studio, financing, distribution, marketing, and so on."

Lumet wants the reader to be aware of all the petty and pragmatic circumstances that dictate how films are made, but he also shows how a director works artistically and can achieve a unifying, and meaningful, visual style for a production. In his work, Lumet has systematically varied the focal length of lenses, the positioning and hardness of light, and the intensity and hue of color filters. All of these options are profiled with examples from his films.

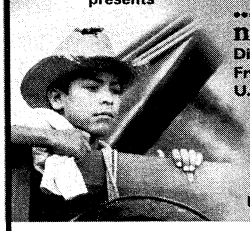
Making Movies is an excellent, behind-the-scenes primer on how films are made, where the artistry enters the picture, and, as Lumet says, why "most pictures aren't very good." This is a gritty, efficient, intelligent, and unpretentious look at directing—exactly the qualities that make Lumet's films so memorable.

S. P.



KINO VIDEO presents

Two films boldly exploring race and labor in American History



...and the earth did not swallow him
Directed by Severo Perez
From the novel by Tomás Rivera
U.S. 1994 Color 99 Min. $79.95

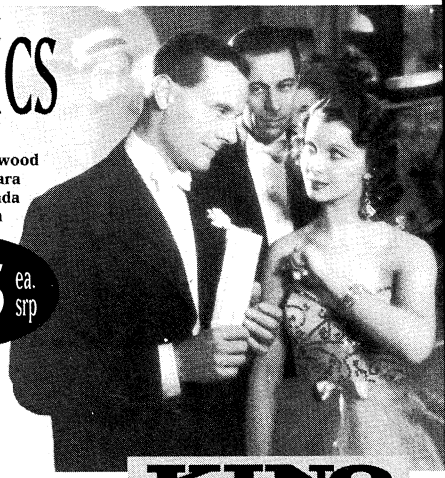
The Killing Floor
Directed by Bill Duke
Produced by Elsa Rassbach
U.S. 1994 Color 99 Min. $29.95

BRITISH CLASSICS
of the '30s and '40s

Rex Harrison Alfred Hitchcock Margaret Lockwood
Beatrice Lillie Charles Laughton Maureen O'Hara
Carol Reed Vivien Leigh Annabella Henry Fonda
Glynis Johns Ralph Richardson Robert Newton

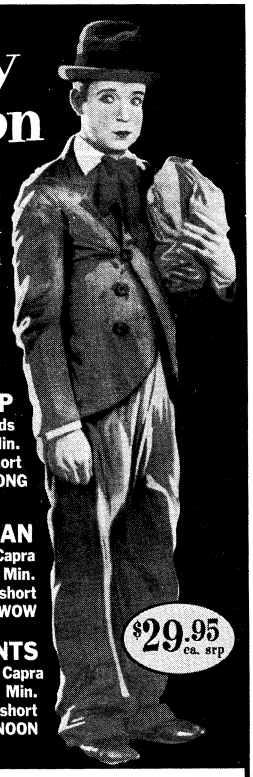
JAMAICA INN
ON APPROVAL
SOUTH RIDING
ST. MARTIN'S LANE
WINGS OF THE MORNING
NIGHT TRAIN TO MUNICH

$24.95 ea. srp



Harry Langdon

...the forgotten clown



TRAMP, TRAMP, TRAMP
Dir. by Harry Edwards
U.S. 1926 B/W 84 Min.
Includes the 1924 short
ALL NIGHT LONG

THE STRONG MAN
Dir. by Frank Capra
U.S. 1926 B/W 97 Min.
Includes the 1925 short
HIS MARRIAGE WOW

LONG PANTS
Dir. by Frank Capra
U.S. 1927 B/W 88 Min.
Includes the 1926 short
SATURDAY AFTERNOON

$29.95 ea. srp

Send for our 1997 catalogue
listing more than 250 films

KINO VIDEO

333 West 39th St., Suite 503, NYC 10018
1-800-562-3330 http://www.kino.com

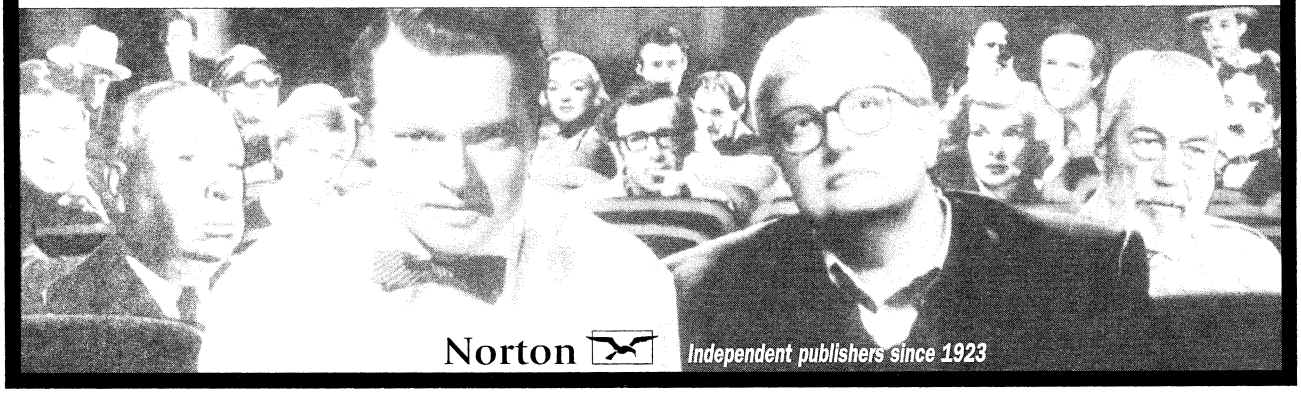
Four stars for the most lavish and entertaining anthology of writing on film ever.

ROGER EBERT'S BOOK OF FILM

From Tolstoy to Tarantino, the finest writing from a century of film

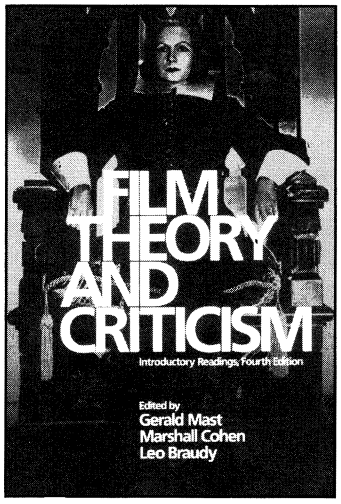
For this delicious, instructive, and vastly enjoyable anthology, Roger Ebert, America's most trusted movie critic, has selected and introduced an international treasury of more than 100 selections touching on every aspect of filmmaking and filmgoing, including Truman Capote on Marilyn Monroe, Lauren Bacall on herself, Kenneth Tynan on Mel Brooks, Pauline Kael on "Last Tango in Paris".

At bookstores Visit our Web site at http://www.wwnorton.com



Norton Independent publishers since 1923

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS



FILM THEORY AND CRITICISM

INTRODUCTORY READINGS

Fourth Edition

Edited by Gerald Mast, *University of Chicago,* Marshall Cohen and Leo Braudy, *University of Southern California*

"Extremely comprehensive and well organized—a stunning array of cutting edge commentary. Enjoyable and informative."—Christopher Little, *Old Dominion University*

"Comprehensive! A useful mix of advanced theory and basic material. A good update of the previous edition."—Patricia Hatfield Lacouture, *Salve Regina University*

"I'm especially impressed with the new pieces on the film artist and on women's film and feminist film theory."—Stephanie A. Tingley, *Youngstown State University*

"Very well put together anthology which strikes a persuasive balance between classical and contemporary texts. Very comprehensive, and extremely useful in my class. Sufficiently accessible for my students, too!"—Reinhart Lutz, *University of the Pacific*

Revised and updated to incorporate suggestions from film instructors and critics nationwide, the fourth edition of this classic text on the evolving aesthetics of film includes 37 new essays showing the impact of new thinking on continuing debates over the nature of film reality, the film image, and the film performer.

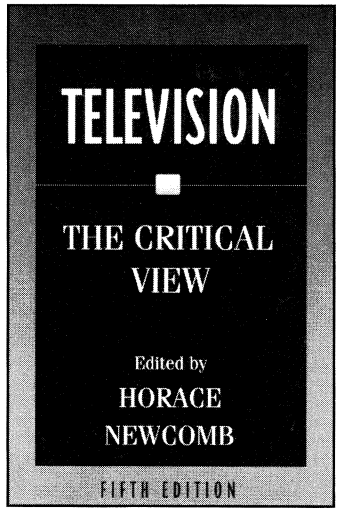
1992 816 pp.; 50 illus. paper $24.95

TELEVISION

THE CRITICAL VIEW

Fifth Edition

Edited by Horace Newcomb, *University of Texas at Austin*



"An excellent update of a classic text in cultural studies. It can be used as primary or secondary text in numerous courses across the communications curriculum."—Fred Fogo, *Westminster College of Salt Lake City*

"Excellent revision from the 4th edition. Wide range of topics as well as his standard on TV as a cultural forum. Inclusion of essays about African-American and women's issues is a definite plus!"—Angela M.S. Nelson, *Bowling Green State University*

Brought completely up to date with 29 new selections shedding light on everything from the latest prime-time television programs to news, talk shows, and commercials, this critically acclaimed text remains the leading collection of critical essays about America's most important medium of communication. Featuring discussions on the production and reception contexts of television, television within the context of postmodernism, and insight into programming overseas, *Television: The Critical View* is essential for any course involving television studies or criticism.

1994 656 pp. paper $19.95

To request an examination copy, write on school letterhead giving course name, expected enrollment, and your decision date, to College Sales Coordinator at the address below:

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS • 198 Madison Avenue • New York, NY 10016

To order any book by credit card, call toll-free 1-800-451-7556

Prices and publication dates are subject to change

PLEASE VISIT OUR WORLD WIDE WEB SITE AT: http://www.oup-usa.org/

Film Studies from Cambridge...

Now in Paperback...

Projecting Illusion

Film Spectatorship and the Impression of Reality

Richard Allen

Projecting Illustion offers a systematic analysis of the impression of reality in the cinema and the pleasure it provides the film spectatòr. Film affords an especially compelling aesthetic experience that can be considered as a form of illusion akin to the experience of daydream and dream. Examining the concept of illusion and its relationship to fantasy in the experience of visual representation, Richard Allen situates his explanation within the context of an analytical criticism of contemporary film theory.

58715-8 Paperback $16.95

Image and Mind

Film, Philosophy and Cognitive Science

Gregory Currie

"Currie is often provocative, as when he analyzes the nature of film images and when he criticizes the theory of 'suture.'"

—Choice

This is a book about the nature of film: about the nature of moving images, about the viewer's relation to film, and about the kinds of narrative that film is capable of presenting. It represents a very decisive break with the semiotic and psychoanalytic theories of film which have dominated discussion over the last twenty years. Professor Currie provides a general theory of pictorial narration and its interpretation in both pictorial and linguistic media, and concludes with an analysis of some ways in which film narrative and literary narrative differ.

45356-9 Hardback $54.95

Screening the Los Angeles 'Riots'

Race, Seeing, and Resistance

Darnell M. Hunt

Screening the LA 'Riots' explores the meanings one news organization found in the landmark events of 1992, as well as those made by fifteen groups of viewers in the events' aftermath. Combining ethnographic and experimental research, Darnell M. Hunt explores how race shapes both the construction of television news and viewers' understandings of it. In the process, he engages with longstanding debates about the power of television to shape our thoughts versus our ability to resist.

Cambridge Cultural Social Studies

57087-5 Hardback $59.95
57814-0 Paperback $19.95

Documentary Film Classics

William Rothman

Documentary Film Classics offers close readings on a number of major films, such as *Nanook of the North, Land Without Bread, Night and Fog, Chronicle of a Summer* and *Don't Look Back.* Spanning the history of the documentary film tradition, William Rothman analyzes the philosophical and historical issues and themes implicit in these works. Designed to guide film students through the "texts" of a wide range of documentaries, his readings also focus on the achievements of these works as films per se.

Cambridge Studies in Film

45067-5 Hardback $59.95
45681-9 Paperback $17.95

Propaganda and Democracy

The American Experience of Media and Mass Persuasion

J. Michael Sproule

Propaganda and Democracy is the first comprehensive study on the relationship of propaganda to participatory democracy in the United States during the twentieth century. While some critics question whether communications industries undermine the ability of citizens to participate meaningfully in society, others counter that propaganda merely circulates socially-useful information in an efficient manner. This study critically examines these various schools of thought in an effort to determine and understand the contribution and effects of propaganda in a democratic society.

Cambridge Studies in the History of Mass Communications

47022-6 Hardback $59.95

François Truffaut

Revised Edition

Annette Insdorf

"The most sensitive and intelligent book in the English language about my work."

—François Truffaut

47808-1 Paperback $15.95

Another Frank Capra

Leland Poague

38066-9 Hardback $54.95

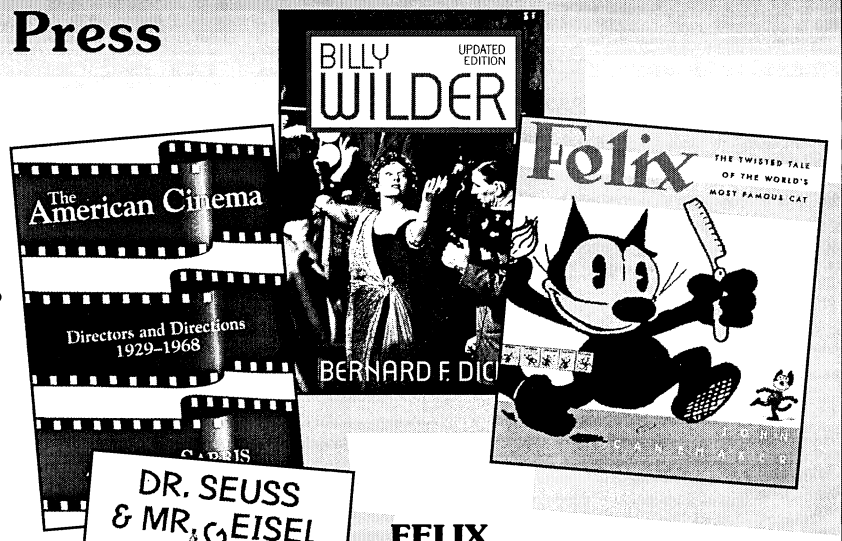
Available in bookstores or from

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011-4211
Call toll-free 800-872-7423. Web site: http://www.cup.org
MasterCard/VISA accepted. Prices subject to change.

NEW PAPERBACKS IN FILM

from Da Capo Press



BILLY WILDER
Updated Edition
Bernard F. Dick

"This is certainly the finest book on this director, and it comes from one of our most important cultural critics."
—Donald Spoto
$13.95

THE AMERICAN CINEMA
Director and Directions, 1929–1968
Andrew Sarris

"*The American Cinema* is the *Citizen Kane* of film criticism." —Emanuel Levy

"The single most important book on film published in the last twenty years."
—Jeanine Basinger, *American Film*
$14.95

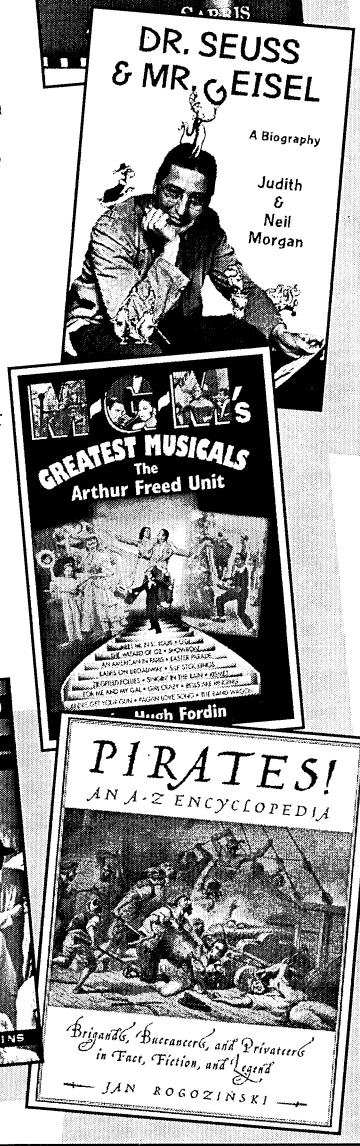
M-G-M's GREATEST MUSICALS
The Arthur Freed Unit
Hugh Fordin

"One of the liveliest records of the day-to-day process of filmmaking ever published." —*Newsweek*

"Indispensable to the film student and fascinating reading for anyone who loves movies." —*Variety*
$19.95

FACES IN THE CROWD
Musicians, Writers, Actors & Filmmakers
Gary Giddins

"Each of his pieces combines historical insight with personal enthusiasm and a narrative energy that makes critical discovery an exciting ride. [Giddins] is a wonderful writer."
—Walter Clemons
$13.95



FELIX
The Twisted Tale of the World's Most Famous Cat
John Canemaker

"A lively assessment of the art and business of film animation, as reflected in the career of its favorite feline, spiced with anecdotes and informative details."
$16.95 —*Kirkus*

DR. SEUSS & MR. GEISEL
A Biography
Judith and Neil Morgan

"I worked with Dr. Seuss. Reading the Morgans' warm and thoughtful biography was like being with him again."
$14.95 —Chuck Jones

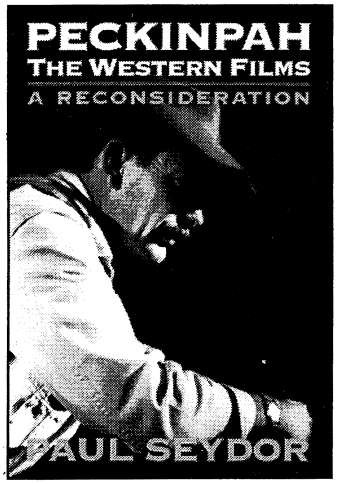
PIRATES!
Brigands, Buccaneers, and Privateers in Fact, Fiction, and Legend—An A-Z Encyclopedia
Jan Rogoziński

"[*Pirates!*] should have a broad appeal, given its worldwide coverage and inclusion of films and novels from which much of our familiarity with pirate history and lore is derived."
$19.95 —*Library Journal*

Available at bookstores; or call 1-800-321-0050.

DA CAPO PRESS
233 Spring Street
New York, NY 10013

For All Those Wonderful People — Out There in the Dark



PECKINPAH

The Western Films—A Reconsideration

PAUL SEYDOR

Foreword by David O. Weddle

"The new edition of *Peckinpah: The Western Films—A Reconsideration* is literally incomparable--the only study of the works of a major film director by a critic who writes both as a former academician with a Ph.D. in literature and as a voting member of that far more exclusive National Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. After all these years, this is more than ever a trail-blazing book, required reading for lovers of film and literature, and for literary theorists as well as cinema theorists." — Hershel Parker, author of *Melville: A Biography, Volume 1, 1819-1855* and editor of *Flawed Texts and Verbal Icons*

When critics hailed the 1995 re-release of Sam Peckinpah's masterpiece, *The Wild Bunch,* it was a recognition of Paul Seydor's earlier claim that this was a milestone in American film, perhaps the most important since *Citizen Kane.*

Illus. Cloth, $29.95

LEGAL REELISM

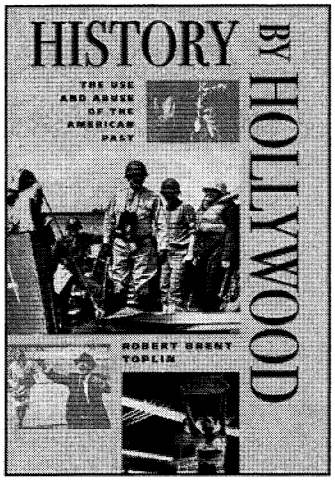
Movies as Legal Texts

EDITED BY JOHN DENVIR

What can be learned when "Justice" stars in Hollywood?

Shedding light on myriad facets of the law/film relationship, fourteen contributors to *Legal Reelism* analyze films ranging from *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*, *It's a Wonderful Life*, and *Drums Along the Mohawk* to *Do the Right Thing*, *Basic Instinct*, *The Thin Blue Line*, and *Thelma and Louise.* The first volume to contain work by both humanists and legal specialists, *Legal Reelism* is a landmark text for those concerned with depictions of justice in the media and the impact of those depictions on society at large.

Illus. Cloth, $39.95; Paper, $19.95



HISTORY BY HOLLYWOOD

The Use and Abuse of the American Past

ROBERT BRENT TOPLIN

"Opens a new window into the relationship between filmmakers and historians." — Gregory Bush, editor of *Film and History*

What happens to history when Hollywood filmmakers get their hands on it? The nation's film capital is one of our most influential interpreters of history, according to Robert Brent Toplin, so much so that popular movies dealing with historical themes often have a greater impact on the public's thinking than books or lectures.

Toplin recognizes the danger of excessive artistic license, yet he understands the importance of creative imagination in designing memorable portrayals for the screen. Basing his analyses on a realistic appreciation of the challenges filmmakers face, he effectively measures the strengths and weaknesses of Hollywood's presentation of history, focusing on *Mississippi Burning, JFK, Sergeant York, Missing, Bonnie and Clyde, Patton, All the President's Men,* and *Norma Rae.*

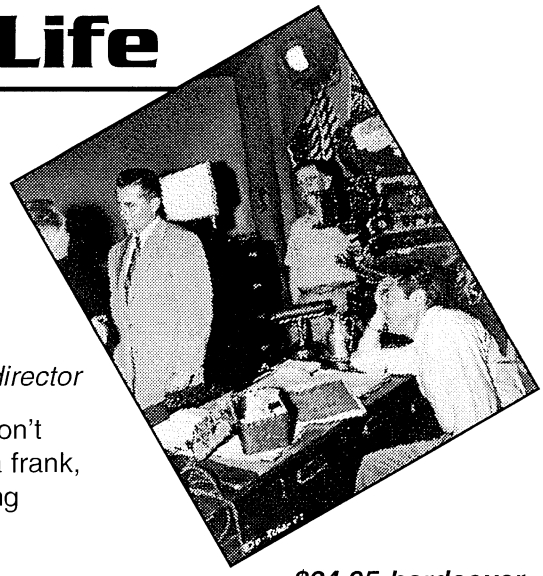
Illus. Cloth, $36.95; Paper, $16.95

800/545-4703

Illinois

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS PRESS • 1325 South Oak Street • Champaign, IL 61820 • http://www.uiuc.edu/providers/uipress

An Unexpected Life



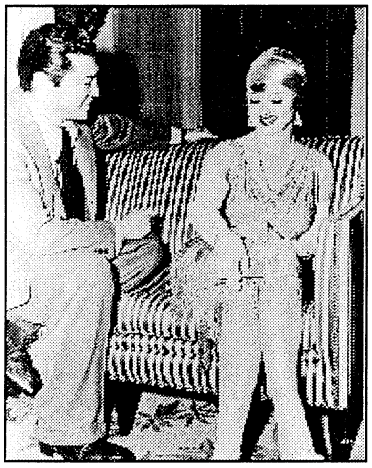
"One of the great craftsmen from the old studio system, Vincent Sherman writes straight from the heart."
—Oliver Stone, Academy Award-winning director

"A very entertaining and exciting book, full of fascinating details. . . . A real picture of how studio directors worked."
—Bertrand Tavernier, New York Film Critics Award-winning director

"Those seeking a portrait of Hollywood's seedy underbelly won't find it here. What Sherman has written is far more unusual: a frank, detailed, eminently clear record of the exhausting, exhilarating business of making films."*—Kirkus Reviews*

"Engrossing and very readable."*—Los Angeles Daily News*

$24.95 hardcover



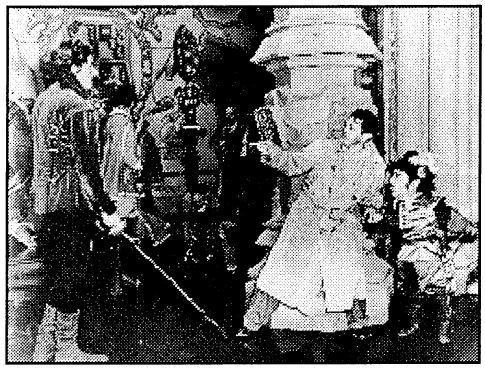
Though he never sought romantic liaisons with his stars, Sherman found that they often came with the territory of directing. He writes with compassion and understanding of his romantic liaisons with Bette Daivs, Joan Crawford, and Rita Hayworth, women who were idols in public but and insecure in private.

STUDIO AFFAIRS

My Life as a Film Director

Vincent Sherman

When Vincent Sherman left Vienna (VY-anna), Georgia, for New York in 1927 with sixty-five dollars in one pocket and a play he had co-written in the other, he never dreamed what life had in store for him. An option on his play failed to materialize, but a lucky break led him from a player of bit parts to a director of stars.



Able to take whatever assignment given him and turn it into a first-rate motion picture, Vincent Sherman quickly built a reputation as one of the best contract studio directors in the business.

Studio Affairs provides a primer on the art of film-making, from reworking flawed scripts to meeting the bottom line financially, from winning the support of his crews to eliciting strong performances from sometimes limited actors.

KENTUCKY

THE UNIVERSITY PRESS OF KENTUCKY

Available at your favorite bookstore

or directly from the publisher

800/839-6855

Film Writes

2001: A Space Odyssey ©1968 Turner Entertainment Co.

HAL'S LEGACY

2001's Computer as Dream and Reality
edited by David G. Stork
foreword by Arthur C. Clarke

Inspired by HAL's self-proclaimed birth date (Jan. 12, 1997), *HAL's Legacy* reflects upon science fiction's most famous computer and explores the relationship between science fantasy and technological fact.
352 pp., 115 illus., 50 color $22.50

now in paperback

LA JETÉE

ciné-roman
Chris Marker

This book reproduces the film's original images along with the script in both English and French.
"This strange and poetic film, a fusion of science fiction, psychological fable and photomontage creates its own conventions from scratch. It triumphantly succeeds where science fiction invariably fails."
— J. G. Ballard
Distributed for Zone Books • 256 pp., 264 illus. $26.50 paper

zone books

reissued in paperback

DADA AND SURREALIST FILM

edited by Rudolf E. Kuenzli

"Kuenzli has done film studies a service by gathering some of the best minds in the fields reflecting on specific topics." — Andrew Horton, *Film Quarterly*
"The thirteen essays in addition to the thought-to-be-lost scenario of *L'Etoile de mer* by Robert Desnos and Man Ray, framed by a meticulously written introduction by Kuenzli, add much new and relevant information to Dada and Surrealist ventures in film."
— *L'Esprit Créateur*
254 pp., 45 illus. $15 paper

The MIT Press

To order call **800-356-0343**
(US & Canada) or (617) 625-8569

http://www-mitpress.mit.edu